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23.2.152

COMAND. GUIDO MILANESI

SUBMARINES

PUBBLICAZIONE DELL'UFFICIO SPECIALE DEL MINISTERO DELLA MARINA

ALFIERI & LACROIX
EDITORI - MILANO
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113

COMMANDANT GUIDO MILANESI

SUBMARINES

THE "MONGE" – THE "H. 3" – THE "U. C. 12" – OURS –

SIXTY ILLUSTRATIONS

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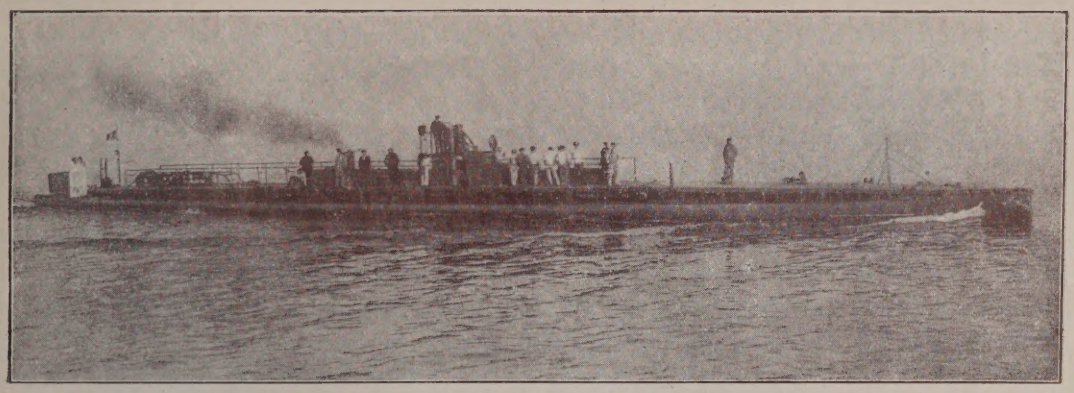


· THE "MONGE" ·

A LA FRANCE

. . . . . elles se prirent les mains avec la cordialité d'étreinte, avec le rayonnement expansif de vieux amis qui se retrouvent après une longue séparation.

(De Vogüe, *Le Maître de la mer*).

Il y avait un peu de lune et la mer était houleuse...

There is really too much noise and nothing can be heard. From the tables in the large dining saloon of the *Prinz Regent Luitpold* the medley of sounds comes as from a telephone, with alternate fulness and intervals of quiet, and in scattered masses, like cloud rising and subsiding before a whirlwind. Every table serves as a nucleus for its own nebula, and the fringes get mixed with that next to it. English, French, Italian float in the air, intermingle, allowing for an instant some polite predominance to one or the other, but promptly breaking out again all together, each having the effect of endeavouring to drown the opposing sounds, and reproducing that telephonic babel which rendered conversation so completely indistinguishable. My companion had to raise his voice; he was a French lieutenant de vaisseau, and the commander of the submarine . . . . doing duty in the Lower Adriatic.

"...C'était au large de Cattaro, au deuxième jour de plongée, et le sous-marin *Monge*, émergé, était en train de charger ses accumulateurs..."

How strange is the fate of some ships. Here we are on board of a German craft which, owing to the unforeseen chances of war, has become Italian, and is now serving as an international military hotel for officers on their way to "over there". Officers of Italian, French and English submarines are made welcome on board and treated like constant guests, since their own boats, so limited in size and so intricate to work, provide them with no sort of comfort between one cruise and the next.

It had been a transatlantic steamer of the North German Lloyd, still decorated entirely according to German ideas, including much artificial gilding and stucco. Our meeting place in the saloon, got up in an Assyrian-Babylonic style with something of the cemetery about it, and something of the cinematograph, was evidently constructed to delight the "Boche" eye, when somewhat misty after much beer, and imperfect digestion. I cannot be too sure, but one might fancy that the fat laugh and the "ach" could still be heard, affording the customary enjoyment to Germans at table: one might fancy that the redundant "frauen" were still to be seen leaving the table midway through dinner, as is their engaging custom. There still remains in the admosphere I know not what of the undefinable sense resulting from much crowded human life, among conditions now at an end. But all that can be realised results in a touch of hostility and of inexpressible recoil.

I have been wandering from my subject: a horrible oleograph of Nuremburg,

masquerading as an authentic picture with the aid of a few touches here and there, has drawn off my attention, as it is just in front of me.

" What filthy stuff! "

" Vous dites, mon commandant? "

" Nothing, I ask pardon... That rubbish over there. What a parody of a picture!... "

" Ça?... " The officer waits for a moment while he looks at the mongrel object... " Mon ami " he said slowly " c'est justement pour faire disparaitre ça du monde, que nous combattons ensemble cette guerre atroce... No doubt the simple drawings of the savage, giving no cause of offence, are much to be preferred to that defilement of all beautiful things which is the prerogative of the German. From those drawings the result is an advance, but from this sort of thing follows a continual downgrade... Et à présent, écoutez moi...

Le *Monge* était donc en train de charger ses accumulateurs, et son commandant Roland Morillot, lieutenant de vaisseau... "

...Roland Morillot! At this name which comes out so clearly during a pause in the conversation, all talk on both sides of us comes to a sudden end. As the meal was nearly over, some of the officers belonging to each of the three nationalities get up from their seats in order to come nearer to us. The customary piano tune ceases:

So good bye to Piccadilly, good bye to Leicester Square

the daily war companion, tolerated from the Channel to the Egean as something quite inevitable, just in the same way as recognition of the necessity of keeping coast towns dark or of using standard bread.

"...who a few days ago was dining at this very table, in the same chair that you have now, commandant " interrupted another lieutenant de vaisseau, a son of the French minister Denys Cochin.

" C'est ça... oui " others added: and I felt for a moment that I ought to disappear from their sight and leave my chair free for that other, or perhaps change myself into the other one, so suddenly called back.

Then the story went on:

"...He was at the periscope, trying to read off with the help of a pocket electric lamp some degree-markings which had become indistinct under a crust of sea salt.

In a space just below the curtain of clouds that lay on the horizon were coming into sight a line of shadows in rapid motion and seeming in perspective to be in alignment, though really travelling at an angle like a covey of wild ducks, and spread out consequently along one line.

The leading ship was much the largest: the Austrian cruiser *Helgoland,* as was discovered a little later by prisoners of the Austrians: behind there came successively the destroyers *Czepel, Tatra, Balaton, Lika* and *Triglaw:* of which the two last were recently sunk by you Italians at Durazzo..."

A pause of most impressive silence: a gust of passion in Italian breasts...

" So there were six of them coming full speed towards the *Monge,* motionless in the moonlight, with hatches open, and crew on deck. The only chance of escape was in the hope that she might submerge in time. It was almost done, nothing was to be seen but the periscope, when one of the line of shadows, probably the *Balaton* came right over the *Monge,* between the bow and the turret, although two torpedoes had been despatched and had failed to strike their target, owing to some malign protection to which Austrians have every right.

A terrible crash on the side and the submarine shivered under the blow like some wounded animal, then the water rushed in, the sea as usual in a fury to penetrate where access had been denied from the first.

Already doomed, the *Monge* dipped her prow towards the depths and so the stern rose into the air, the blades of the screw whirling with enormous speed, with the convulsive action observable in the fins of fish dying in some shallow; it is a strange matter this agony of a submarine. By reason of their delicate balance, and the careful planning of the weights, the latest position in sinking is unlike anything else. While their great power of attack allows them to exercise most terrible attributes of destruction, they are on the other hand themselves exposed to extinction from quite trifling causes: and generally they carry down with them their crews shut in. The armed power becomes a coffin within a few seconds.

Still there are a few seconds, and within these few seconds the *Monge* had some thoughts of continuing to live.

" Give her some air forward!" ordered Morillot. The order was put into execu-

A French submarine.

tion, although men nearly overcome by the water now rising inside the compartment, were striving in face of death to reach the centre, where water had not yet come in...

" The two engineer quarter-masters acted like heroes..." said the narrator with a choke in his voice.

" Je les ai eus avec moi sur le sous-marins à . . . . ces deux gaillards-là " interjected one of the commandants in a low voice.

" Good: compressed air at 150 atmospheres was pumped in, and with the aid of the emptied tanks, the bow came up once more, but only a few centimetres above water, so that every wave washed over it.

A ray of hope? Perhaps... The boat, though quite on her beam ends, seemed to clutch at the surface of the sea as if some imaginary lever was held by invisible hands, and still she was afloat... In the combat against physical conditions carried on by this poor wounded half-drowned habitation of men, some equation of stability seemed to exist, based on miracle and so resulting in equilibrium.

But now from those dark phantoms, immovable all round about, livid flame shines through the darkness, rays in search of some central target: a crash and a glitter of water, then another crash, with diabolical illumination, and a momentary vision of something that changes its shape, something that is rent and splintered, and then cries of dying men: the *Monge* quivers in agony and the water round is bloodstained. Another crash and again the quivering. The end had come.

All that survived of the crew were under cover. Under the baleful glare of the shells the figures showed black, es in some terrific dream.

" Appell! " called Morillot, in even accents. Appell, ensigne de vaisseau, second in command of the submarine, did not reply, for he was already below and getting up the last of the crew.

" Goulard! " There was no Goulard to answer; he would never answer any more.

" Morel! " Nor could Morel hear any more.

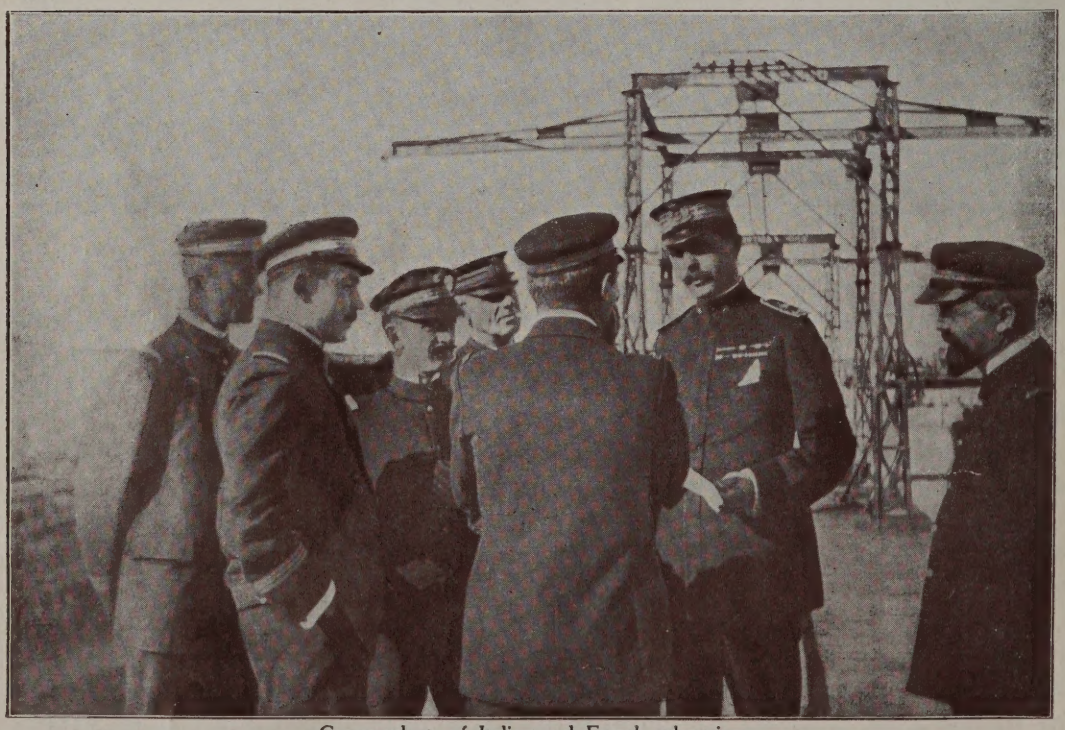
Now the sea began to rise remorselessly. This creation of men, by them till now controlled must disappear: must disappear into that wild foam which is the winding-sheet of every shipwrecked soul. It is no more than a useless sacrifice if men are to be carried down to the abyss in company with this distorted and useless mass of steel.

" Mes hommes! " shouted Morillot " Vive la France. Jetez-vous à la mer ".

And as each man wavers and clings to this little piece of France, which is sinking under the waves of the Adriatic, " Tout le monde à la mer, je dis " he repeats sharply. And the dark water rises, and rises, all about the lonely man inside the turret already vanishing, though all that remains of the craft entrusted to him, which he refuses to abandon. Now the salt bite of the sea reaches his mouth, and still the imploring cries of the men scattered in the water or already picked up by the enemy, pass unheeded.

" Commandant, nôtre commandant, sauvez-vous ".

" Moi, non... " he replies, and his voice seems no longer to belong to man, but to the immortal symbols of memory and of national story.



Commandants of Italian and French submarines.

" Sauvez-vous ! "

" Vive... la... France... "

Now there is a little more foam, a hissing in the air, the latest breath of the stricken animal: something that down below still strives against suffocation. Then no more. The unvaried surface of water, all is over.

1. Morillot, Commandant of the "Monge" - 2 Devin, previously Commandant of the "Faucanet", prisoner.
3. Cochin, Commandant of the "Papin" - 4. Joven, Commandant of the "Fresnel", prisoner.

" Il était marié avec la fille de l'amiral De Marolles, et il avait un fils, né après le commencement de la guerre, qu'il n'avait jamais vu et dont il parlait très souvent avec nous... " continued the officer, taking up the thread of his story placidly, without the tremors of voice and the changes of tone lately unavoidable.

" One day came a letter for the young widow by the post from Austria, and it had been passed even by the ravenous censorship called Imperial and Royal ".

" En voilà la copie, cher commandant... Je vous en prie... ajoutez-la a votre recit futur... "

Camp de concentration de Deutsch Gabel
Bohème 20 Fevrier.

Madame,

Malgré l'éloignement nous joignons notre douleur à la vôtre pour pleurer la mémoire de celui qui restera malgré tout Notre Commandant. Frappé par un coup de destin alors que la victoire souriait éclatante, le Commandant Morillot est mort en héros après avoir fait l'impossible pour sauver son navire et son équipage.

Pur et noble exemple de bonté, de travail, de courage et de vaillance tous nous l'aimions - mais combien en mille il savait nous le rendre!

De toujours s'en souvenir nous faisons le serment. Veuillez recevoir, Madame, l'hommage de notre profond respect.

L'équipage du " Monge ".

By this time our table is surrounded with officers in considerable number, as the meal was over. Nearly all are commanders of submarines, and the reading of the letter was received with the most profound silence, more impressive than volumes of sound. The spirit of that hero, whom all knew so well, was passing among them. Before their eyes came once more the features, the simple yet severe expression, the sober mien; they saw, above all, that look of the human being already touched by fate, and indeed a denizen of other scenes...

" Wonderful " murmured an Englishman.

And the narrator remained a long time silent, mechanically turning over the letter in his hands.

" Allons, mon ami ", said a collegue " qu'est que vous avez ? "

" Rien..." And the bare word seemed to convey a shock.

OOO

It is late, almost two o'clock, and the submarines anchored in an extended line near the shoal water need the presence of their commandants. Some of these craft have to leave shortly to cross the Adriatic and settle themselves where there may be good work to be done: others require petrol or benzine, perhaps also to charge their accumulators: yet others of them must retouch their paint, grown rusty in the water: for each of these enterprises the presence of the commandant is necessary. So it happens that the saloon of the *Prinz Regent Luitpold* loses its occupants, and becomes free for the work of the stewards.

Let us go outside too. We notice in the deck house, printed across the uncouth German woodwork the word "Ausgang" still traceable though much discolored. Beyond this and in front of us, is aligned the fleet of submarines, looking so vast, on the surface of the sea.

Sharp nozzles and flat tails, nude rounded backs, rectangular fins in pairs along the hull and at the ends, hawse-holes like eyes, little eyes from the deeps below, all these combine to create a grotesque aspect for these terrible war animals, all humpbacked with their turrets, and of themselves enough to terrorize an entire ocean.

Ichthyological caricatures, it is not among them that may be found the elegant lines of the grayling or of the dolphin: these are ours; others have angular outlines with straight sides, like the fish of St. Peter: these are English; seals and morses are parodied: these are French. All these are ferocious fauna, born in different latitudes and now sunburnt so as to change their greyish colour into an opaque and nameless tint that brings to mind the skin of some large dried fish, and is the better for giving out no sort of reflection.

On the surface these creatures seem half dead; down in deep water, without limits to their course in any direction, that is their life.

And then in the days of their full career of slaughter these monsters lie hidden, enclosing within themselves all the human life that is now sunning itself on their backs, but then only the tops of the periscopes can be discerned low down on the water. These are almost invisible and may easily be mistaken for innocent flotsam which the sea carries hither and thither and which usually no one minds about. So masked they can send thousands of human lives to destruction; consequently even these tiny objects which seem to be nothing at all, are now watched and are destroyed...

"Ausgang". We obey the imperious direction. We return to our own ships.

" Savez-vous, commandant, j'ai encore une lettre à vous montrer," so said the officer before I took leave of him and his collegue. " It was written by one of our helmsmen, prisoner at Gratz, to a comrade on board the *Papin*. He mentions the end of the *Monge* and brings into relief the noble figure of Morillot ".

" Good ".

" I have it on board. I will send it to you, but not till I come back from my cruise, for I go out to-day and in about two hours ".

" Where are you bound? "

He pointed vaguely eastward.

" Où voulez-vous que l'on aille? A l'ennemi, LA-BAS... "

. . . . . .

" Ausgang ": the exit... for whom?

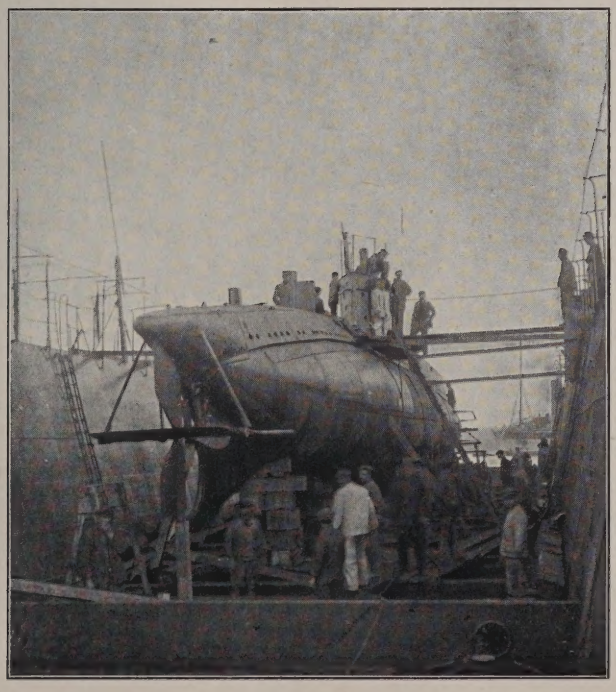
ooo

An unexpected order was received on board my vessel also, and being sent on after this cruise to another port, we did not come back to the submarine base.

I wrote to the French commandant to remind him of his promise, but I got no reply. Then I wrote again, and sent the letter to his friend, asking him for news of his colleague.

One evening I opened a telegram. It was quite evidently abbreviated so that its real meaning should not be understood by the censor.

" Notre ami comme Morillot... LA-BAS... "



These men died for their country.

· THE "H 3" ·

...So good bye to Piccadilly...

She occupied the last place of the long row of submarines and profited thereby to stand somewhat apart.

Of robust limbs, large, designed on hard lines, she appeared to have for her colleagues that entirely physical disdain which boys of precocious strength have for their other school companions.

That her moorings were saddened through the incubus of a big, antique wall which shut off from her the first light of the day, and that the slow current of the harbour constantly covered her waters with the naphta from other ships, this did not at all matter to her; also pride has its pricks; and for a submarine like her who had crossed the Atlantic and had found it only a trifle to have gone from England to the Bosphorus at the time of the Dardanelles expedition, and from the Bosphorus to the lower Adriatic at the epoch of our war, an inconvenience so trifling in the life of a submarine, was one more opportunity to show her endurance to everything, coldly, silently, nobly.

Looking at her when she was riding at anchor, following her manoeuvres when she had to leave the protection of the harbour to go "to the enemy" and observing her when she re-entered from her very dangerous cruises, one guessed her character: three adjectives derived from the three above adverbs, cold, silent, noble. But when her angulated contours were profiled wide away on the open sea like an immense fin wrapped up in the smoke of the internal combustion engines, and they grew gradually smaller disappearing in the violet-coloured fog of the horizon, running towards probable death between a thousand ambushes of "yonder there", of "laggiù", of "là-bas", as the submarines call the tragic amphitheatre of the enemy's coast standing out against our coast, then one felt indeed that at a certain point the preciseness of the word may fail in any language and that the submarine, also if she is odious, is an admirable beast. Her name was short and colourless, *H 3;* the initial, Holland type, the numeral, the place in the series H.

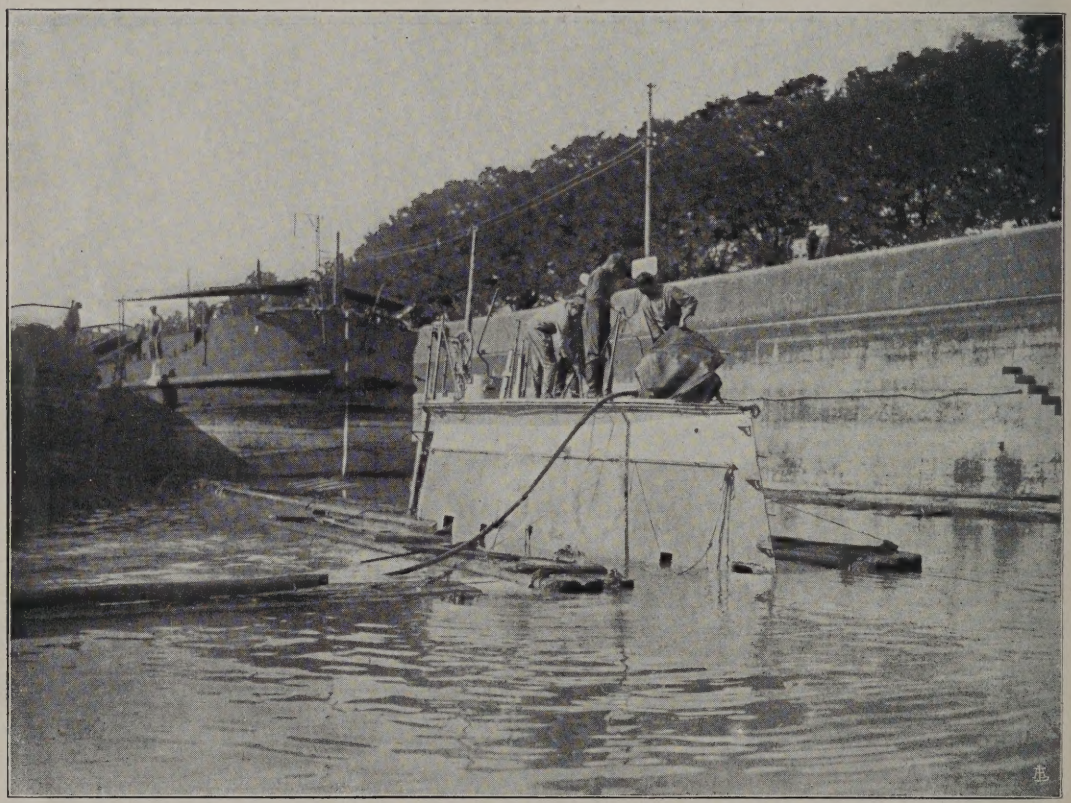
But she would not have desired any other name. Historical allegories or reminiscences were useless for her: a new daughter of a terrible realism, she did not desire precedents. To her absolutely positive mentality, the fact of an *Archimedes* gone

to the bottom in waters 25 meters deep, and of a *Medusa* launching torpedoes, must seem absurd. Better therefore that *H 3,* which seemed to be a dry term of a chemical formula and reminded the C_6 H_6, the formula of the petrol on which she lived.

Pre-emently a destroyer, she was happy that her compages were nothing but physics and chemistry, the two forbidden fruits which the serpent of science has offered to mankind to destroy each other, enticing it with the false mirages of civilisation and progress, the two most empty words of any language.

Of old, of antique, she had nothing but her flag, a fluctuation of white and red on the grey iron, high in the centre of her hull, like a steep rock, and she carried this ruler of the seas on her back like a tame tiger carries its tamer: for it only obedience, for everybody else the terrible bite of her six torpedoes.

She was made like that, the *H 3,* and when she had to trace invisible furrows



A British submarine in the basin.

in the Adriatic, she liked to keep wide away from any other colleague, just like a princess of the water jungle, because she desired a wider field for her chase.

And for several months she had perused rapidly, and with her face downwards, all the routes which irradiate from Cattaro, had followed all the recesses of the enemy's coast, pushed herself into the daedalous of the islands, scented all the waters, for months she had re-emerged here and there in the boundless solitudes to pant her wrath at never finding anything else on her way but the desert and to breathe with her robust lungs a mouthful of pure air before disappearing again into teh abysses.

" Look at the *H 3!*—said her companions when she re-entered the harbour. —She seems to speak a very bad language to-day ".

And immediately they drew a little closer on their moorings, to make room for her and to let her grumble by herself with the uproar of all her open port-holes.

ooo

One night, in a small extemporaneous theatre of the military town, first numbers, eccentrics, diseuses, divettes, stars and hybrid males recited, and with their bodies gesticulated, buffooneries set to music, and had attracted the usual crowd of white uniforms.

Amongst those who appeared to enjoy themselves were those who had returned from the sea and those who would go there, all of them living in an ambient of peril. "We are not dead and perhaps we shall die, *ergo nunc vivamus*". And this joy manifested itself through excessive shouts and laughter, or by their accompanying in disorderly chorusses the songs sung by barely dressed songstresses. Between an obscure to-day and an obscure to-morrow, down, quickly, a few hours of oblivion, some phrase not of torpedoes, of canons and of death. And as it is well known that a sort of erotic exaltation is liberated from the large human hecatombs, it appeared that all that youth vomited out from the ships, the torpedo boats, the submarines, fermented as if it were invaded by a thousand acids of vice and no longer retained by anything on the ordinary moral level.

English and French officers, in the box, around me: faces which for a long time had been deprived of any interest whatever in the things they had before them and in many other things: nearly all of them commanders or seconds of submarines, that is to say, men who had something of the deep cut into their soul, something of the bleakness of the periscope cut into their look, something of the excessive loneliness cut into their words. And there were in the shadow of the back-ground of the box two new faces of Englishmen, turned towards the stage like two immovable masks of indifference.

"Do you not know them?", asked one of their colleagues who noticed me examining them.

And on a negative sign on my part, he told me their names, while from the two faces who bowed, spurted out an English smile which is immediately an old acquaintance: lieutenant George Jenkinson, lieutenant Edward Lane, commander and second of the *H 3*... Of the *H 3*? Indeed, and they seemed to be more out of place here than all the others. The Horatian *carpe diam* did not seem to have any power on their strained spirits—one saw it—towards a fixed thought for which there was no truce: Yonder there... the abyss... the life of wonder in the box of steel... the eternal ambush...

And while the orchestre underlined the adventures of a certain Lisetta, to sing which it appeared to be necessary to throw alternately upward a pair of female legs, the two faces grew rigid again in their immovability of masks, without being shaken by the flood of applause and by the shouts of the pit, without the slightest sign of their taking part in the thoughts, in the life of the others, extraneous, glacial, almost hostile.

"Every night, like that", said a French officer to me in a low voice. And then, as if to defend himself against an accusation which I had not made, he added: "However, when you know them better, you will find them 'très gentils garçons'. You will see".

Shortly afterwards, the night of war, very dark, dotted with the azure bleakness of a few street lamps, took us all up again and separated us, sending us onward to our destinies, along the dead streets of a Pompei inhabited by shadows and touched by an immense thing, profoundly black it too, the sea.

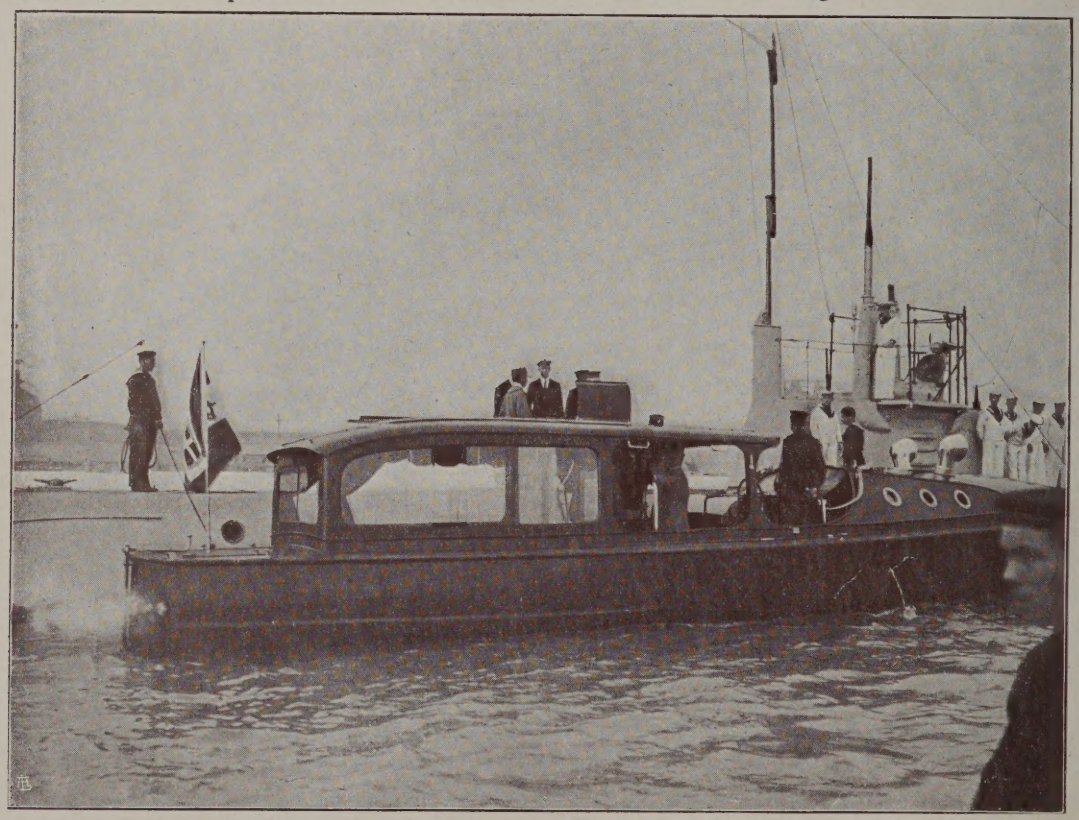
ooo

Down there, beyond the line of the ships, the shore of the ante-harbour was covered with foam through the breaking waves. On the wings of the tempest, chimeras of the air, convulsed by tragedies old as the creation, flew aloft from the sea towards the land, howling and throwing clouds of salted dust on their way. And,

as it is always the case with those who have lived on the sea, it seemed that their howl was intermingled with human cries: "the cries of all those who had found their death through the sea and who had done them wrong", as the strange Adriatic legend of the "Sciò" says.

Lashed by the rain, the submarines were lined with their naked and shining backs along the mole which serves as their stables, and when following the heaving of the sea, they shook now and then the halter of their mooring with a nervous motion. At the end of the row there was an empty place on which the squalls could freely carry out their whims. The *H 3* was not there, she was out, on cruise.

"She will be here shortly", said her neighbours, and they repelled with loud shouts the small embarkations and the motor boats which directed their bow towards that empty place to seek a little rest. And down there all the sentinels of the ante-harbour sharpened the look-out towards the waves breaking at sea and towards



His Majesty the King of Italy on board of a British submarine.

the black horizon, which was an imitation of the unfringed rim of old paper, trying to discover the grey body of the war beast which had been expected since the morning and had always been punctual to return.

Every two hours, when mounting guard, one said to the other: "Attention, the *H 3* must re-enter!" And the whole day of tempest was scanned by this always equal tune of a human clock: "Attention, the *H 3* must re-enter!"

ooo

Also on the next morning, the place was empty. A sea which had in its aspect the white lividity of murderers on the morning after the crime, reflected here and there azure gashes of sky between rags of tired clouds.

That the *H 3* had not yet returned, this was ascribed to the tempest of the day before. Certainly, she had had to fight against the sea at the surface, like an

ordinary torpedo boat, as she had surely exhausted her electric accumulators on her cruise without having been able to recharge them. No, there was nothing to be afraid of. And now that the sea was quiet, it must be a question just of a few hours to see her return. Everybody was convinced of this. And all the commanders of the submarines at anchor, who, in their moments of rest are led through sheer habit to walk up and down the mole near their boats, as if not to lose sight of them even then, were now assembled instead near that empty space of sea which no doubt would soon be occupied again by its legitimate occupant.

"And then the *H3* would not let herself be done for", said one of them laughing.

"Oh no, and we shall shortly hear of some lucky devilish deed of hers", added another. "No, the *H3* would not let herself be done for".

"If we had the places of the two officers prepared for lunch, should we do well", asked a forethinking and practical Englishman.

"Certainly, we should do well. By heavens, to think that by half past two the *H3* should not yet have returned?"

It was a doubt to be laughed at. But three hours later, during lunch at the *Prinz Regent Luitpold*—the German ship sequestered at the beginning of the war and made up as a hotel-ship for the homeless of the sea—between the hundred tales of the sea, many strange silences were interposed. If the eye of a speaker fell by chance on the two empty seats, it seemed that a sudden paralysis caused his voice to grow lower; and then all the eyes converged for one moment on those points of common recall, to draw away therefrom immediately, but with an effort and as if that sight had put a weight upon them.

And when the talk fell on one of those who sat one day at that table and who now, invited to the large feast of Death, could send to their seats nothing but their spirits upward from very distant abysses and already rendered uniform through time in their aspect of shadows, it seemed that an imperious voice heard by nobody and felt by everybody, imposed silence.

For one moment only, but the word vanished, everybody felt suddenly in himself the sensation of a painful certainty, equal for all. And the conversation which was at once taken up again, appeared to be made rather to cover a shivering.

ooo

In the afternoon, a French submarine returned from "yonder there". The first question which the commander put to his colleagues who had come to welcome him, was a master-piece of that ingenious hypocrisy which straight souls use sometimes when they are martyred by an internal anguish and do not wish this anguish to be installed into others.

"At what hour did the *H3* return?"

But his voice, although it maintained its natural level, betrayed an anxiety not at all proportionate to the simplicity of the words. And then, instead of receiving the specific answer which his question required, he was interrogated in his turn.

"Why?"

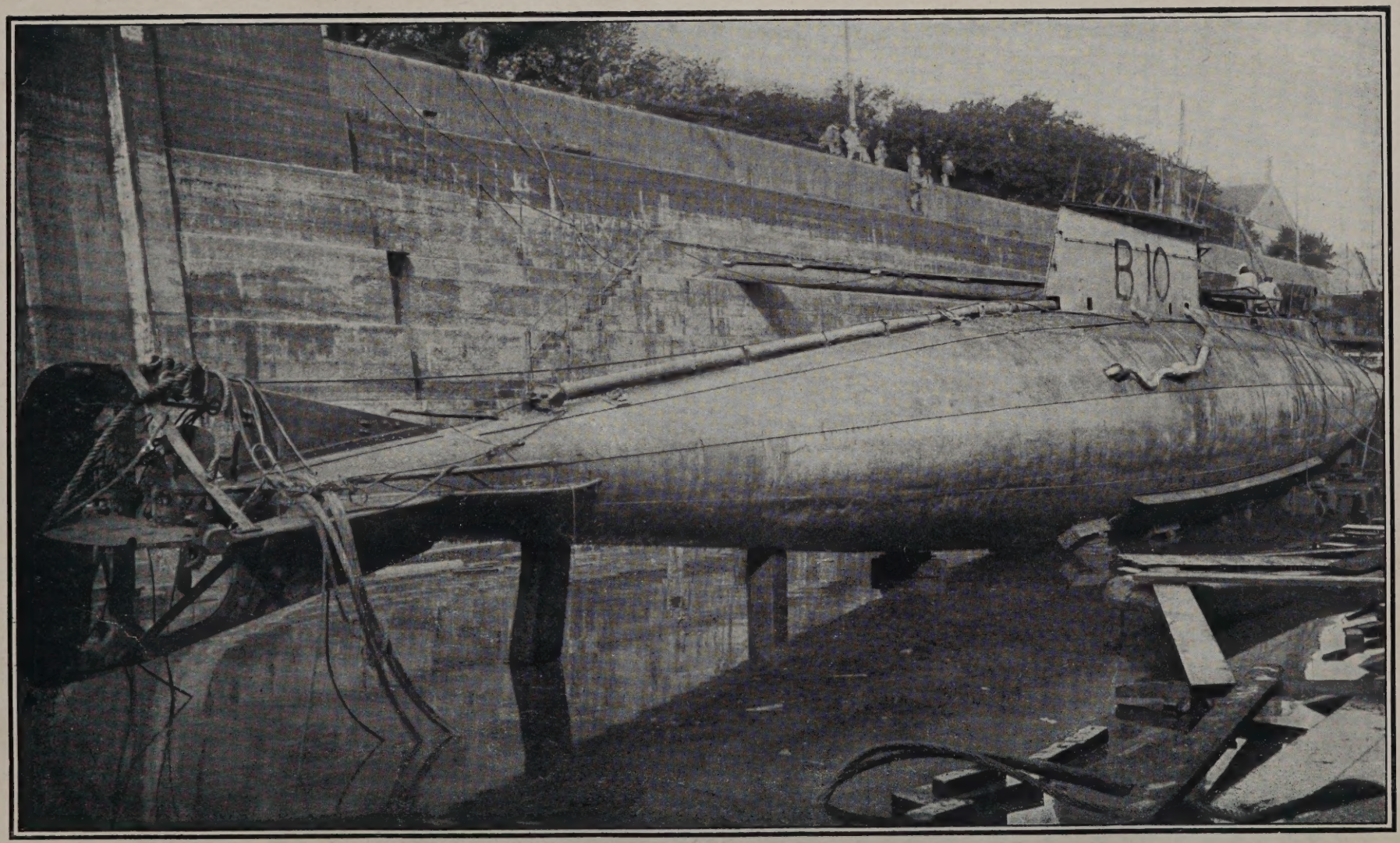
This strange dialogue made by hidden apprehensions, had taken the aspect of a duel in which any direct answer would have exposed too much space. And the interrogated in his turn dropped this "why" and remained for some instants silent; then he became suddenly sincere and asked in a loud voice:

"And was she at her usual place of ambush at Punta... down there?" And with his oustretched right arm he indicated vaguely the open sea, towards Levante.

"She ought to have been there... But why?"

"Are you certain?"

"Yes, but why?"



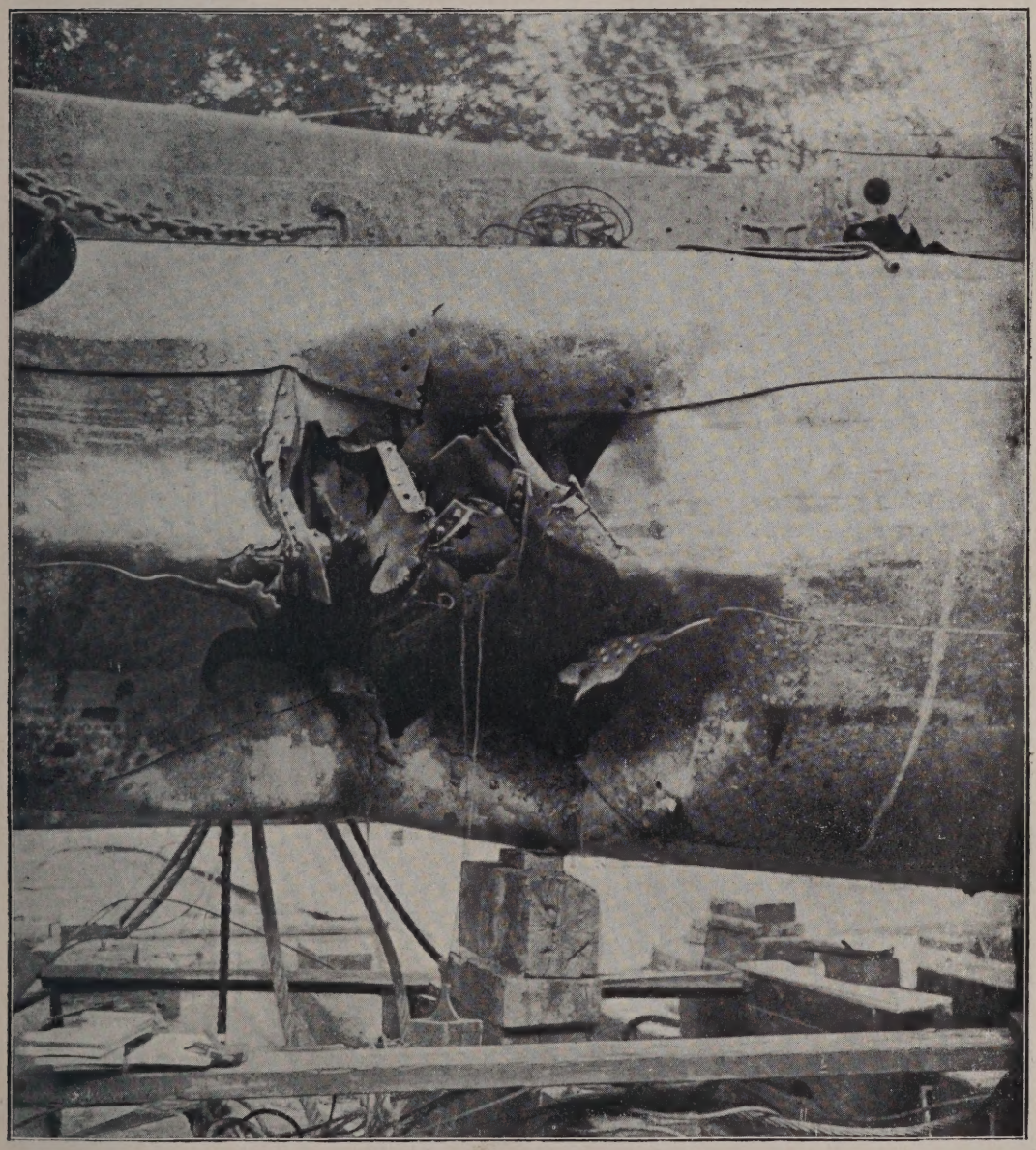
A British submarine under repair in dry dock.

" Because ", said the commander very slowly, " the day before yesterday, when I reached my place, which was only a few miles from the post of the *H 3*, I brought my submarine down to the bottom and remained some hours at ambush so... "

He interrupted himself to meditate.

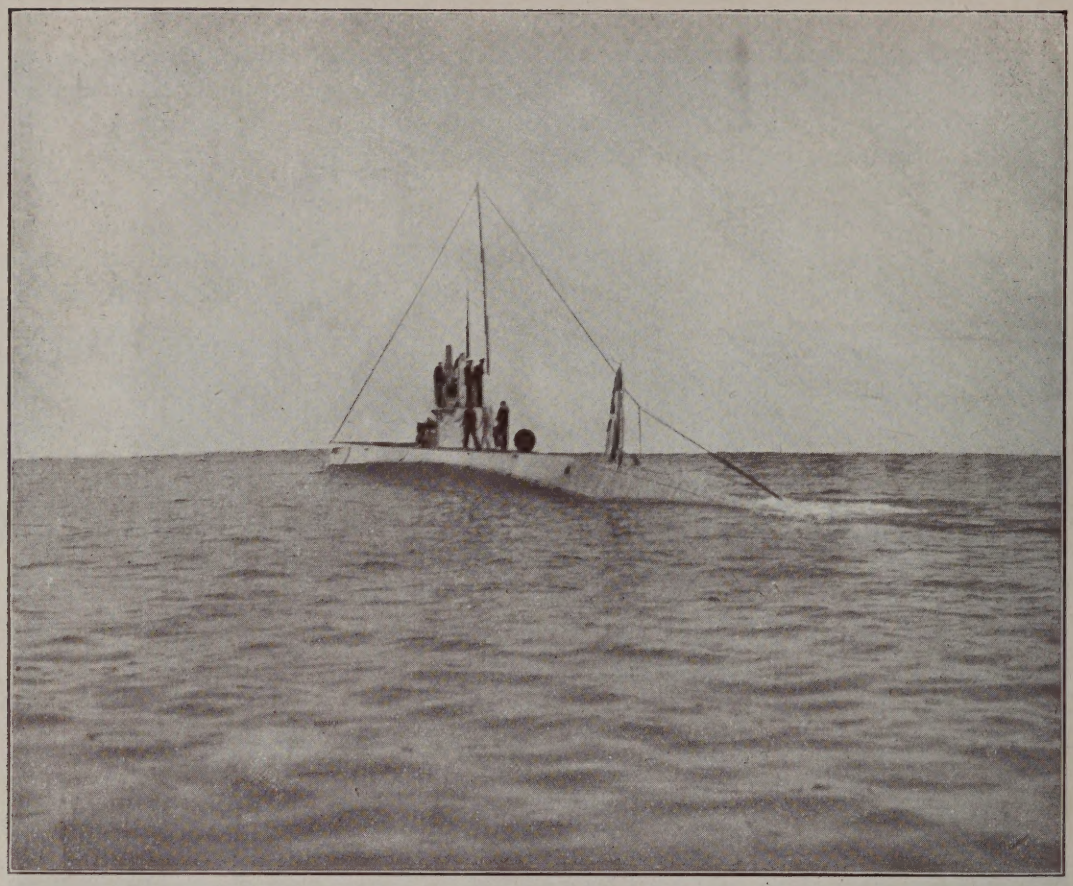
" Well? " they asked him quickly.

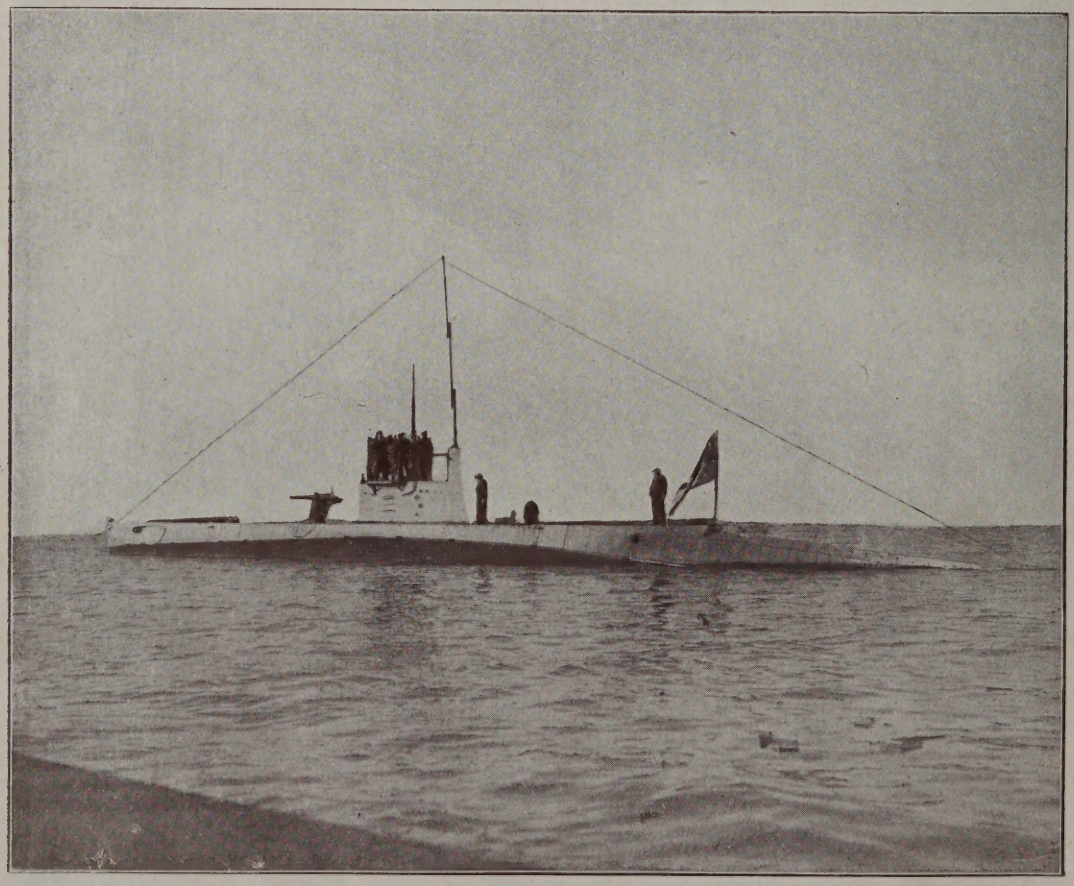
" The sea was quiet and I could hear by the vibrometer the most distant noises for an enormous range. Quite suddenly the whole hull of the submarine was shaken heavily and vibrated for some moments. Something came to us like a very distant



Results of a bomb on a submarine.

bellowing, which produced a sombre echo in the compartments of the boat. Torpedo? Mine? Telluric phenomena? I turned immediately the compressed air on and rose towards the surface until the end of the periscope emerged. At the panoramic lense (a big lense which reproduces inside the submarine what the periscope sees outside), the sea appeared quiet as far as the furthermost horizon, and the enemy's coast was delineated clearly and near. I was uncertain whether to return to the bottom when, behind a promontory which shuts off the town of . . . I saw





British submarines.

an enemy's torpedo boat appear, which steamed towards the open sea at full power, as if scouting. She was indeed hunting for something on the spot where the *H 3* should be; and certainly her examination was conclusive and rapid, because after a few revolutions she turned her bow towards land and disappeared to the place from which she had come. Then, in the panoramic lense, there moved, above the mountains of the coast, the black spot of an aeroplane. It turned round and round in big circles, descended gradually as if forming an upturned cone and seemed to touch the water in the vertex, and when it ascended determinately, it appeared to carry with it on its rapid flight towards land the joy of good tidings of death, like a contented hawk..."

"...or like a raven", said somebody solemnly.

Like a raven! And all the heads bent in silence.

"Mine?" asked a voice.

"Certainly, a bank of mines enchored between one cruise and another of our submarines, on the spot where the aeroplanes often saw us".

And among all those men there who defied daily the same end, not one thought of asking whether it would have been possible that someone of the *H 3* had been saved. No: mine and submarine: two undersea things: the immense crash of a thing already buried: the horrible confusion of iron, water and blood down below... To hope? What for? In what? In whom?

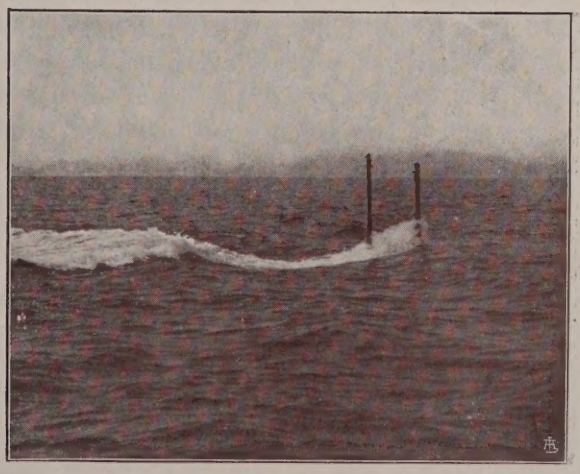
And when the officers of the submarines returned to their boats, they gazed for a long time at the empty space of the *H 3*, and saw that from the columns of that part of the mole were still hanging into the sea the moorings for her.

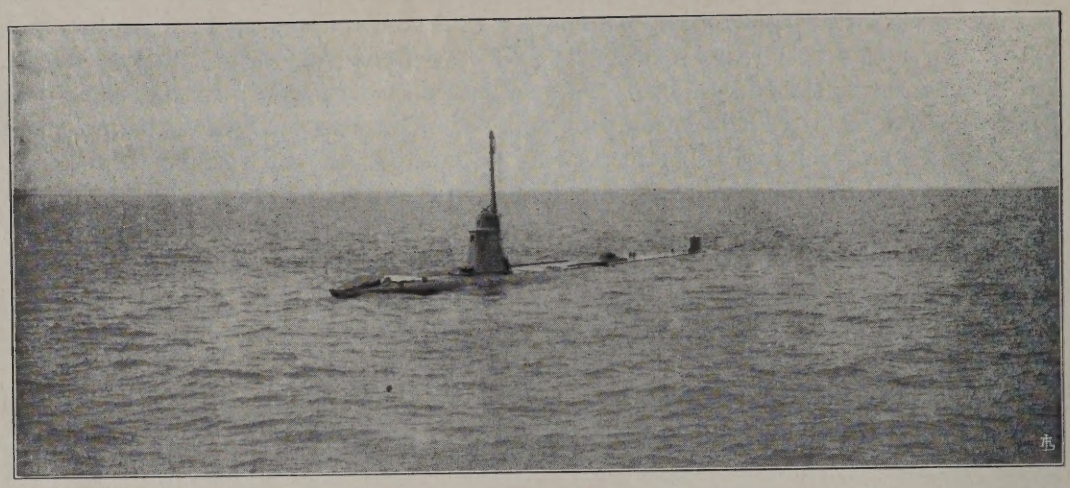
OOO

For two more days, the usual places for the naval lieutenants Jenkinson and Lane were prepared at the table of the *Prinz Regent Luitpold*. Then, one morning, the steward adjusted the distances between the plates by widening the circle.

And when the others came, nobody apparently paid attention to this trifle.

Only when they sat down and when they exchanged the morning salute, each saw before him for an instant an English smile, which came from far, far away, and was extremely sad, and all saw two white faces covered with a blue veil and bitten already by the thousand murderous things of the sea, bending in a slow, long greeting which suddenly slunk away, just like monsters salute.





· THE "U. C. 12" ·

The romance of the *U. C. 12*? Just that and perhaps a little more. In the severe exactitude of this episode are comprised all the emotional factors which ensure success to popular publications: a prologue of polished hypocrisy, mysterious and criminal action, an epilogue that is tragic in the highest degree, plots in every page, and a terrible punishment in the last chapter, reserved for the chief culprit.

At this point it is permissible to insert a dedication:

"*To those who did not believe that it was necessary to declare war on Germany*", to those, and there were planty of them, who found the pages of revealing history at Louvain, Bruges, Malines and Rheims insufficient, we will endeavour to show "what sort of thing Germany has become", rather more definitely than in "What kind is Germany", a work which has been set down as the defamatory production of an apostate German, Heine.

Let us begin with the prologue: let us notice particularly the opening date. The 25th June 1915—fifteen not sixteen—and thus about two months after our declaration of war against Austria, our mine sweepers, going on with their accustomed daily task, and cruising in the waterway leading to one of our naval bases, discovered a barrier consisting of twelve torpedoes intended to blow up any of our ships on entering or leaving the port.

This type of weapon was a new one, and without the least doubt, German. But this caused no great surprise, since the aid in material ways given by Germany to Austria was well known to everyone. It might be a matter of discussion whether the first named power, not being at war with us, was showing much tact in allowing its own weapons to be used against us: but by this time everyone had been made aware of the kind of thing called tact in Teutonic lands. The surprise consisted rather more in forming conjectures as to the method used for placing these mines: but this did not last long: and when about three weeks later another set of mines was discovered and removed from close by, and in the same waters, all doubts were at an end. The mysterious minelayer could not be other than a submarine, immersed, and therefore hidden, going about its sinister task as a deceitful agent in the execution of some of the pre-arranged ferocities held in reserve for the purpose

of terrifying the universe, a German phrase to be put into practice after a German fashion.

Now Austria, that squinting Austria, has never been quite clever enough, even in wrongdoing. As Napoleon said, she was always one day and one idea too late, and this time she could not have invented anything new unless by a course of action that fairly puzzled those who had not understood the Austrian character.

But the fact remains: undeniably remains; that "felix Austria" believing herself the possessor of an absolutely unconquerable weapon, continued to direct here, there and everywhere in front of our naval bases, its invisible brood, laying eggs containing death on a vast scale. These eggs were collected and destroyed by the indefatigable muzzles of our mine sweepers, foxes possessing an unerring scent.

Now we have had the prologue and the action. Here follows the epilogue.

Everything was ready for receiving further visits... On 16th March the crafty cetacean, emboldened by partial success, arrived once more in close proximity to the first base that we mentioned, navigating quite below the surface, and therefore undetected. Then at two o'clock came a great explosion, and an immense column of water, turned yellow with petrol, announcing to the Piazza Marittima that justice had been done. Torpedo boats and all kinds of craft hurried to the spot where the sea seemed still under the influence of some invisible agony, indicated by the spreading oil, life blood of the monster, by the upcoming of air bubbles, its last sigh, by broken pieces of wood and fragments of limbs.

Since the submarine is a ferocious and very hateful beast, it was thought advisable to make certain of its death, so the divers with their apparatus, the funeral undertakers of the sea went below to investigate the manner of the demise.

There was the corpse: lying on its left side supine, broken in two, in over thirty metres of water. There it was: and on the hidden course traversed by it was still visible the proof of its guilt; a torpedo line intended for our destruction, and promptly set in motion. To the stroke of the hammers of the divers upon each portion of the hull, there was no response whatever: absolute silence, the silence of the tomb.

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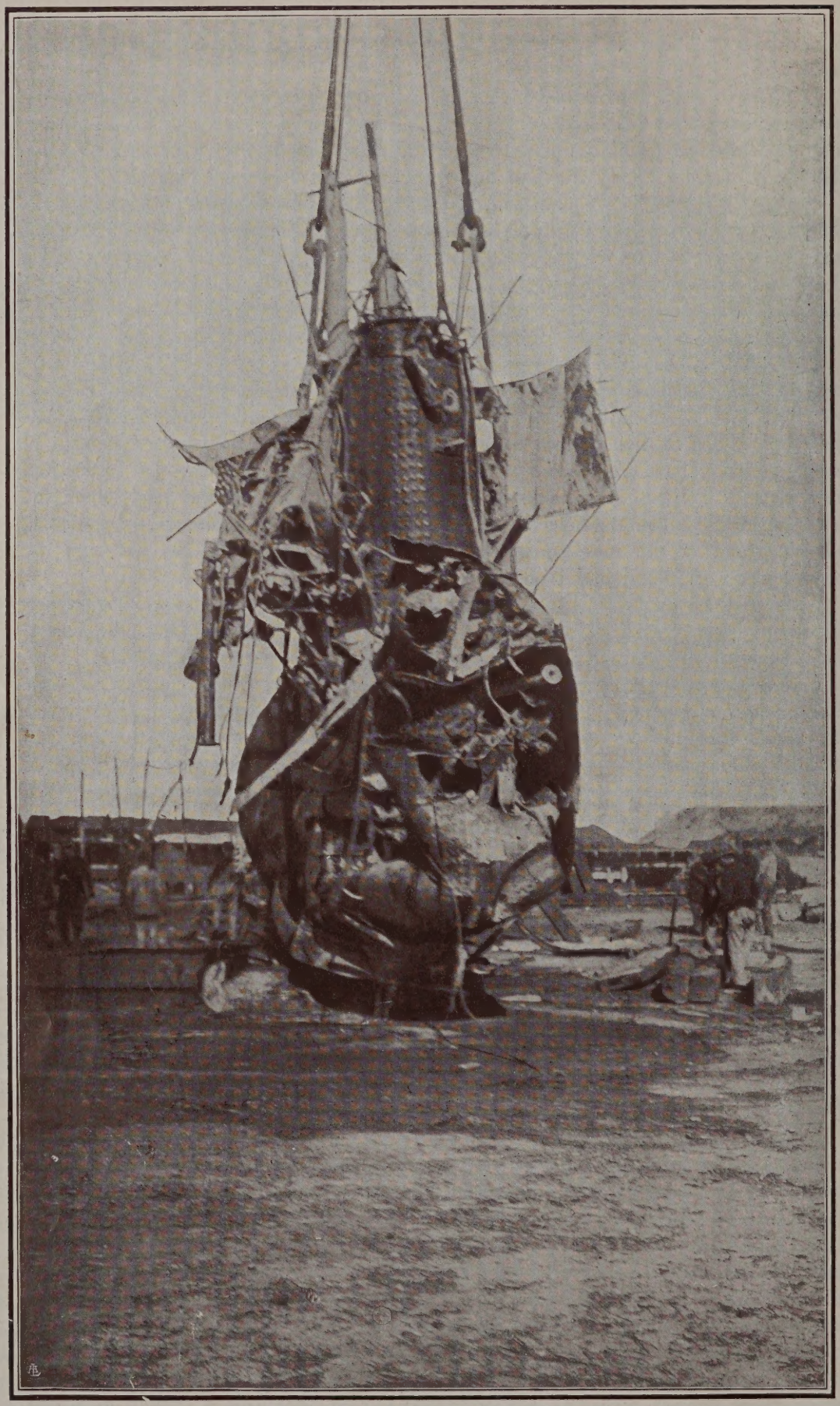
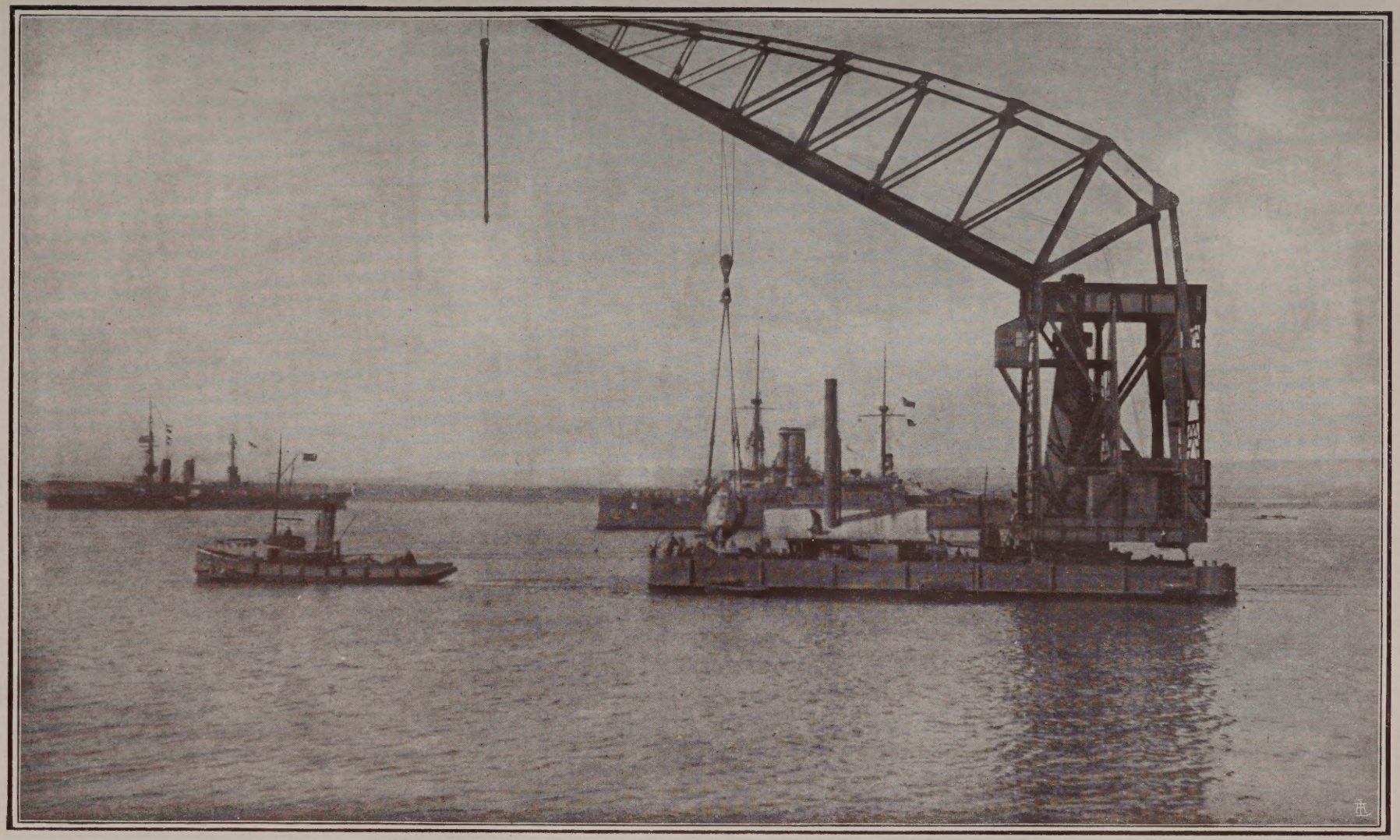
Then there came into the mind of the Commandant of the port the brilliant idea of attempting to raise the slain brute, weighty though it doubtless was. Employing every precaution, since a portion of the terrible cargo remained on board, and might yet do harm, and, with most praiseworthy efforts on the part of the sailors and divers alike, in a short time it was lifted from the bottom and reached sunlight once more on the shore of our naval base, its two fragments put close to each other, all dripping with water, oil and relics of humanity.

Now for the first time its name was visible: *U. C. 12*; its place of birth: The Weser Dockyard at Bremen; its builders: Ditta Siemens Schuckert.

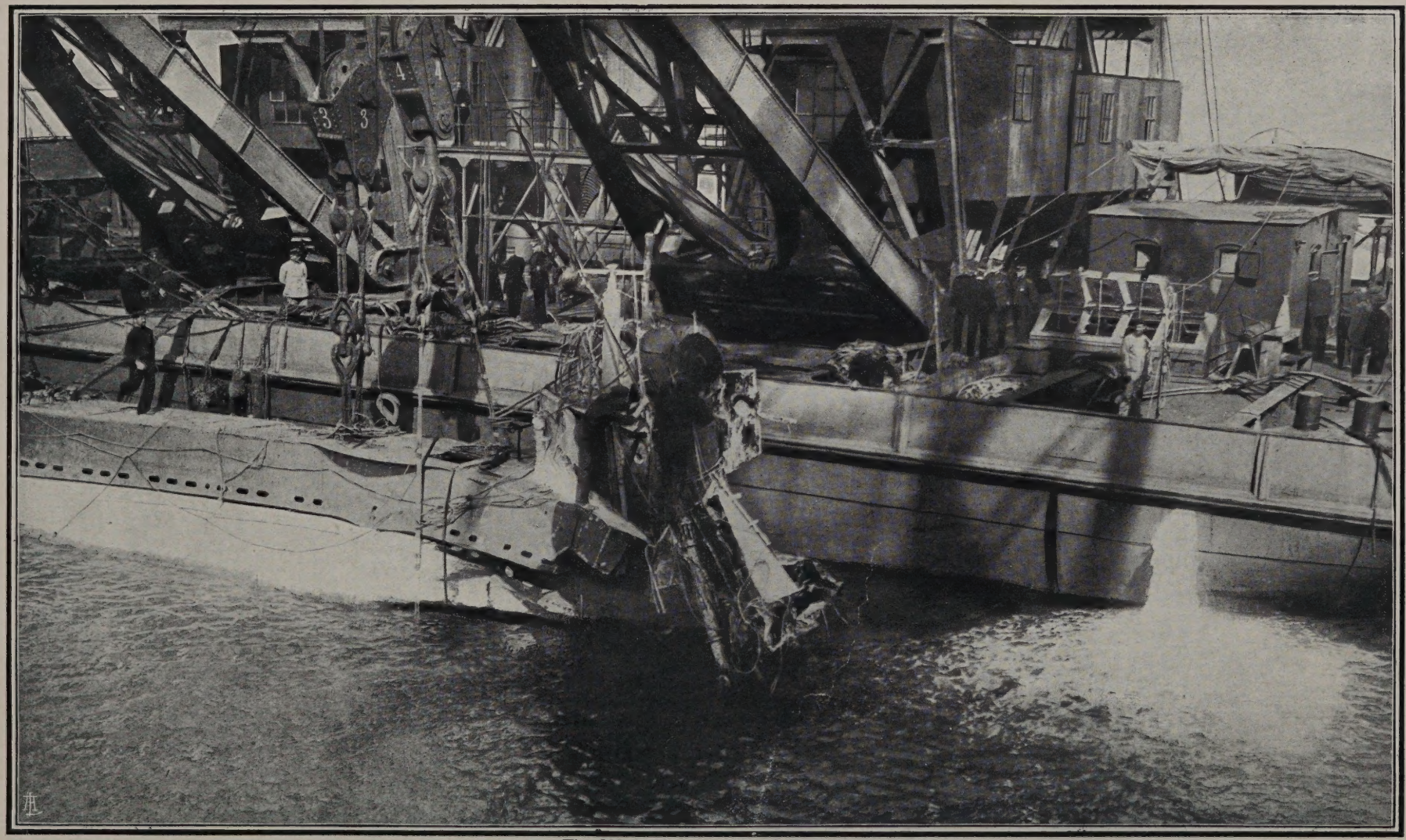
Amid the incredible entanglement of twisted and rent plates, of projecting and broken tubes, of wrenched and shattered machines, among the monstruous teeth in metal created by the caprices of the explosion, the foldings and crushings which no sledge-hammer could reproduce, it was difficult to effect any progress or to penetrate into the compartments still intact, in order to find out more about the vessel. "What made it even more arduous in following up this quest", said the judge of instruction in words which I have transcribed exactly, "was that in close contact with the part of the submarine which had been blown up, amid a pile of broken pieces, and thoroughly wedged in, etc... were found masses of human remains, which corresponded to two bodies with the heads completely crushed and disfigured, etc... With great labour these remains were carefully removed, though already in a terrible state, and



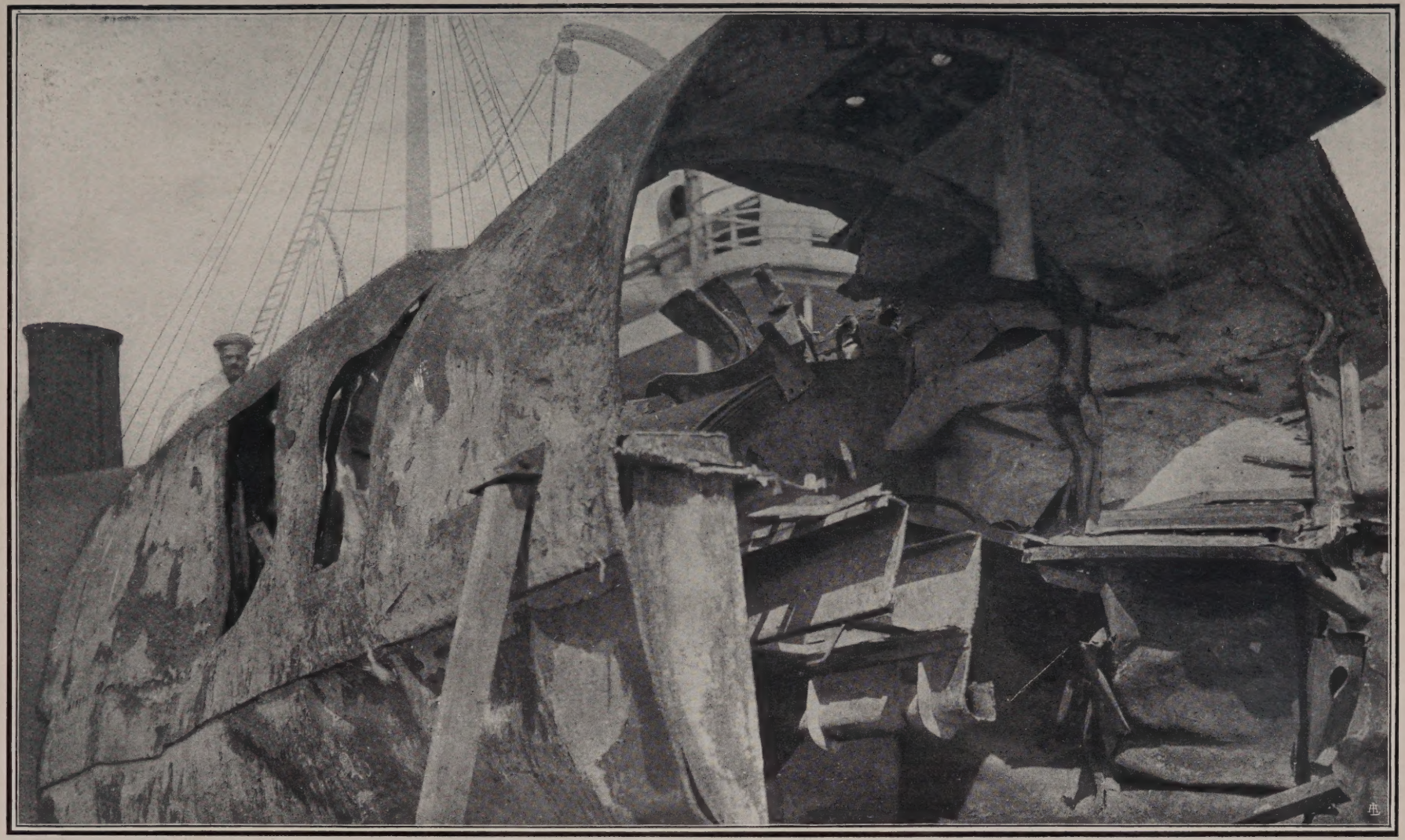
Effect of the explosion in the "U. C. 12"



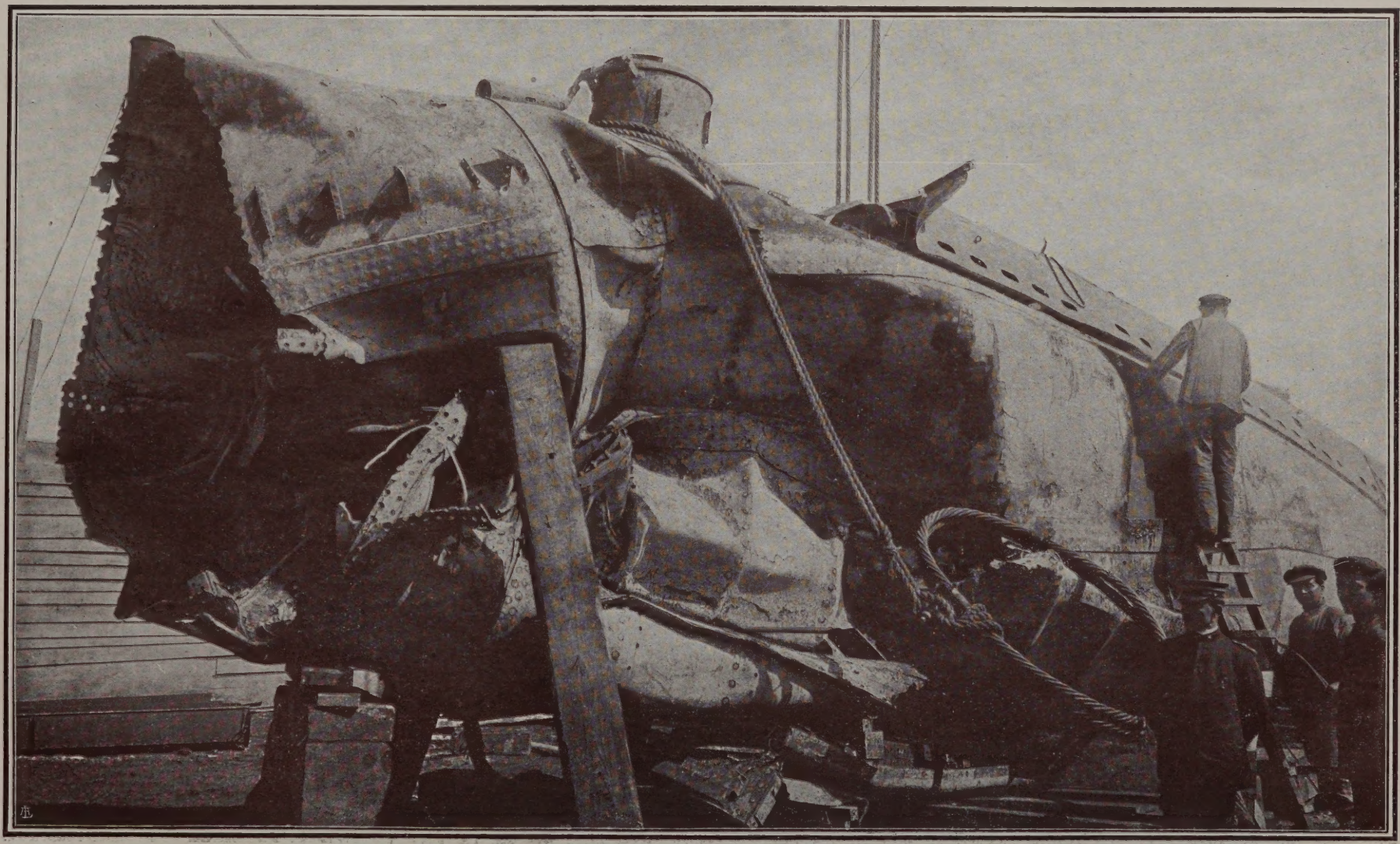
Raising the German submarine "U. C. 12"



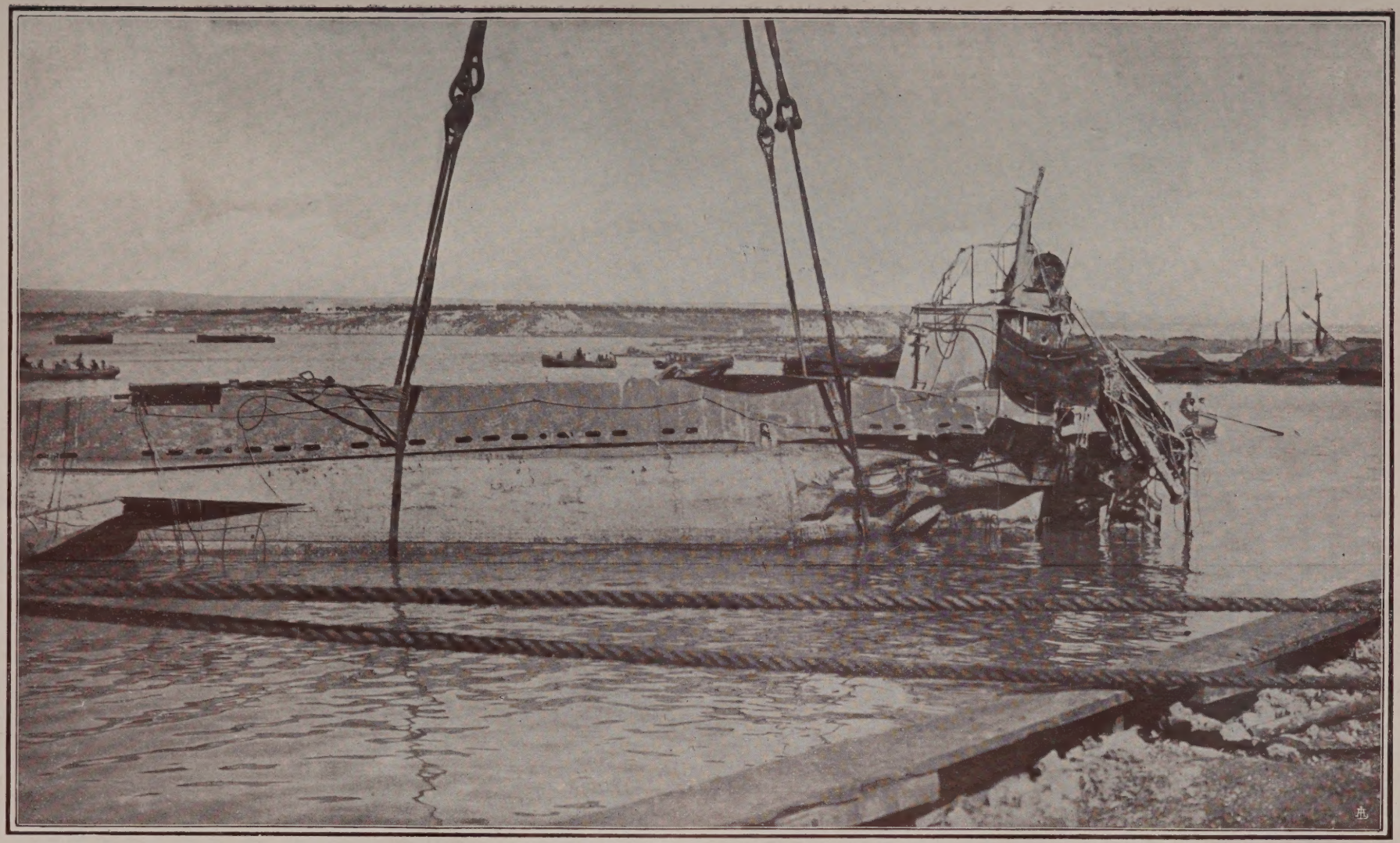
The "U. C. 12" brought up by cranes.



Details of damage sustained by "U.C.12"



Beginning the work of repairing the "U. C. 12"



The fore part of the "U. C. 12", showing the damaged turret.

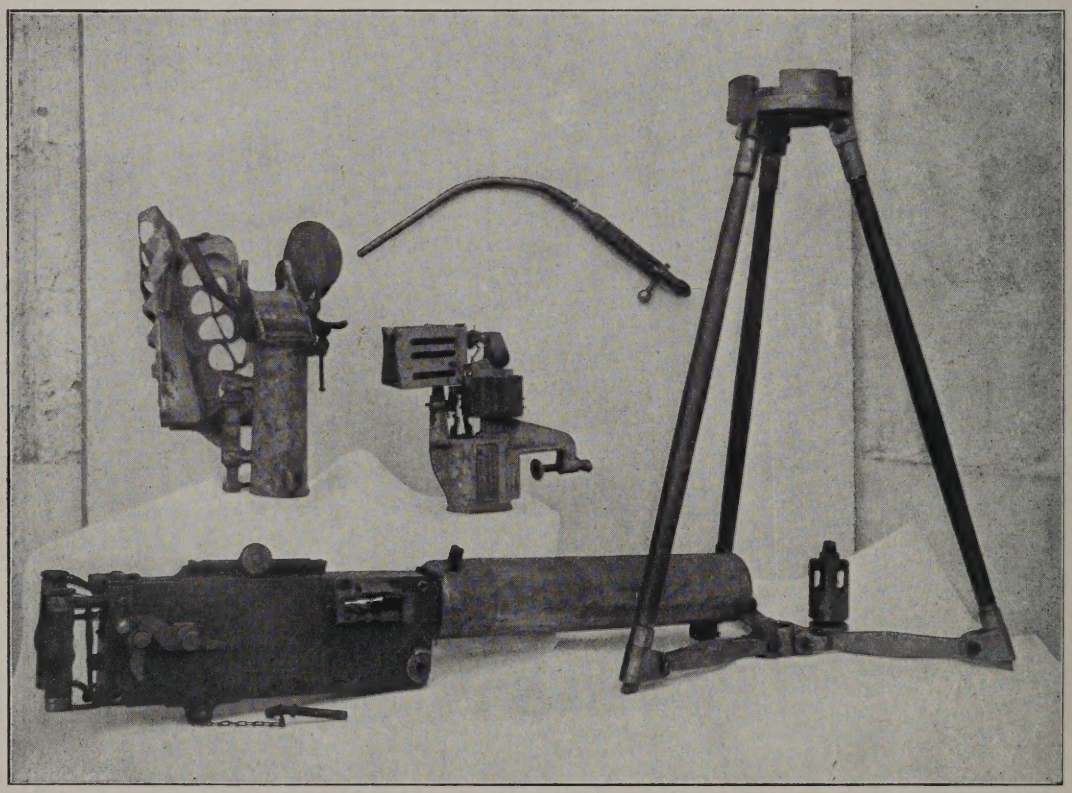
amongst scraps of skin adhering to the metal plates, amongst shattered bone in morsels also stuck fast, amongst foul and fetid rags, they succeeded in drawing away clothes and remains, etc..." This serves to give an idea of the scene and of the horrible findings which necessitated deliberate action in this precinct of death.

It was considered to be best to employ oxidised flame jets in order to make way into the two compartments. Then came to light in all their sinister aspect the hidden things affecting human beings and their labours. Once again the representative of law gave testimony:

" Control chamber: body No. 1 - Compartment and forecastle: bodies No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4 - Under the turret, near the twist of the plating: bodies No. 5 and No. 6, shattered to an extent that it took three days' time for a man to put them together - Among the engines: No. 7, 8, 9, 10 - In fragments: No. 11 - Without a top to the skull: No. 12 - Blown to pieces: No. 13 and 14 ".

I have decided to give the list as it stands, so that it may lose none of its sad significance. The poor creatures thus identified one by one received Christian burial, to which they had the right, in that they fulfilled the duties imposed upon them, barbarous though those duties were. The fact of death even in a bad cause, is a good defence.

From the letters and the clothing found, it was clear that everything on board

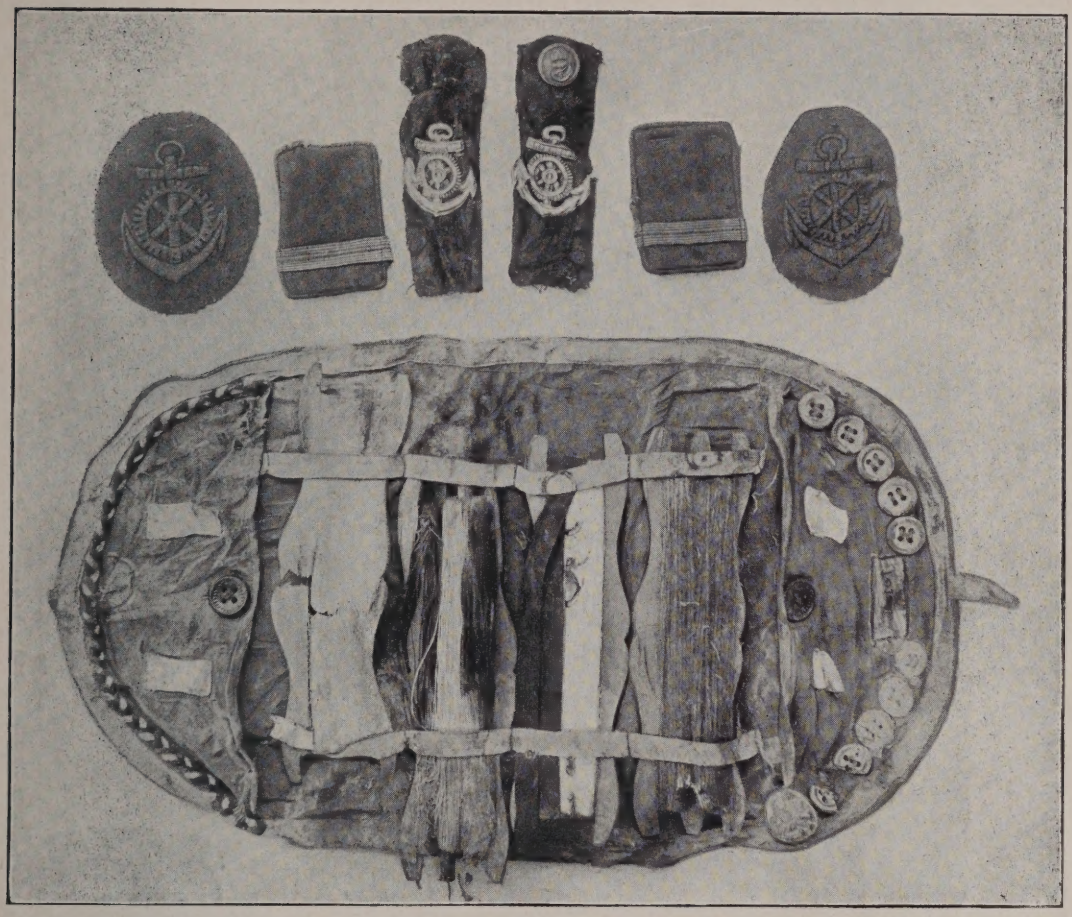


The mitrailleuse found on board "U. C. 12"

was German: ship, armament and crew; the hydrographic charts and the printed records all had the stamp of the " Kaiserliche Marine ", the imperial crown of Germany ornamented the covers, all the clothing worn by the sailors was stamped with the well known B. A. K. (Bekleidung Abteilung Kiel), the distinctive mark used by the German military stores at Kiel; the postal arrangements were with Kiel; the private payments of members of the crew were addressed to the Kiel Savings Bank; and the list of officers and men gave details entirely German as to name and rank. There was nothing Austrian on board except the flag, with astonishing carelessness

changed at Pola on the 28th June 1915, just a few days before the first mine laying in the waters close to our base.

With regard to the flags and the German methods, it is as well to record what flags this submarine did carry, and the purpose for which they were intended. Be-



Personal effects from "U. C. 12", and a hold-all.

sides the Austrian and the German, there were also English and French flags on board, so that every means of deceit and betrayal might be at hand, and then there was a Greek flag too, in case of neutrality becoming advisable. This was all.

This repulsive absence of scruple or of respect for any sort of law, rejected by our own type of mind with infinite disdain, is placidly systematised by this scientific savage, who is, and always will be, German.

If his history, his art, his mode of thought is investigated, whether among the officers in high command or inside a submarine, it will be evident he is a savage, as described and will continue to be so immutably.

One more detail, among the many that came to light, and worth consideration as attaching a definite value to the article entitled neutrality in the present war, is the fact that the money found on board the *U. C. 12* consisted of Austrian kronen and GREEK Drachma.

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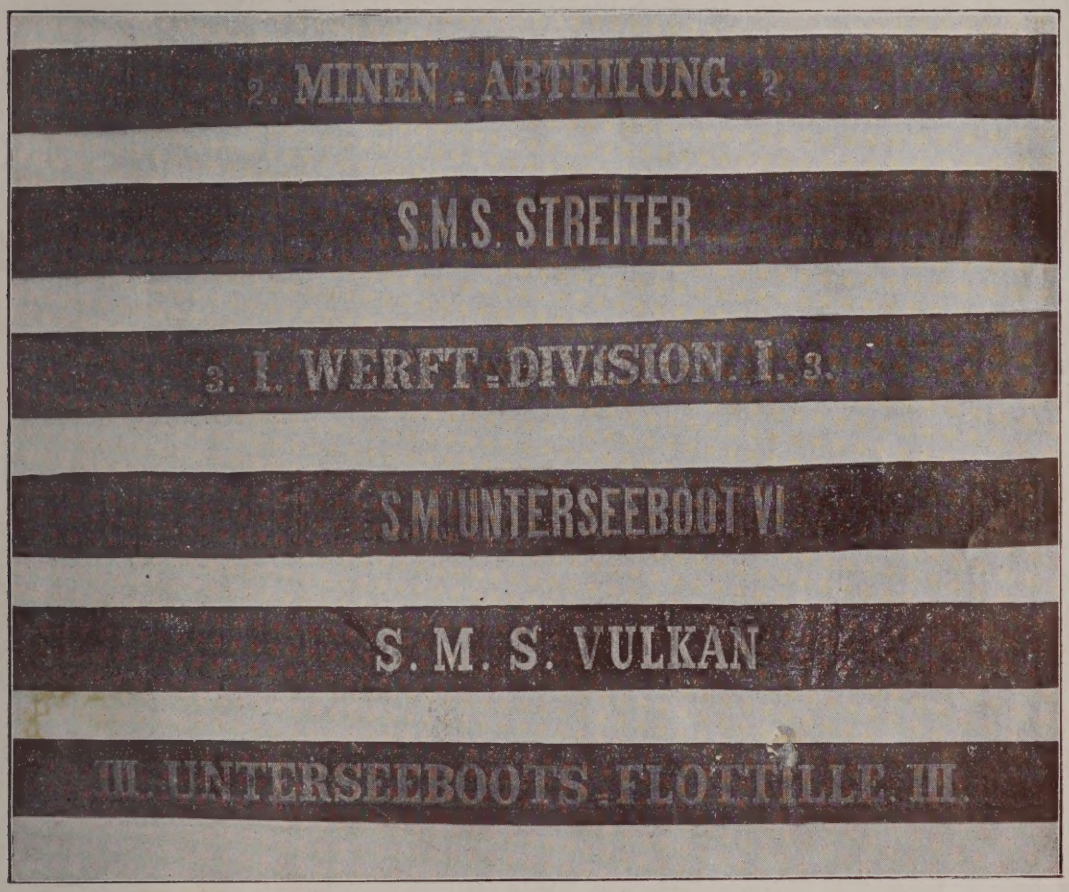
The microscopic examination has told us of the building and the life in the *U. C. 12*. In order to avoid an entirely useless essay on technical matters, nothing has been said on these points; all the more advisable because at this moment, the

Officers' and crews' caps from "U. C. 12"

vessel completely refitted and purified under our flag, is in process of repaying to the enemy twofold all the evil that it inflicted. Still it may be of interest to make some mention of the brief but busy existence spent in doing us injury, with some satisfaction to superiors, if we may judge from the Iron Cross found on board.

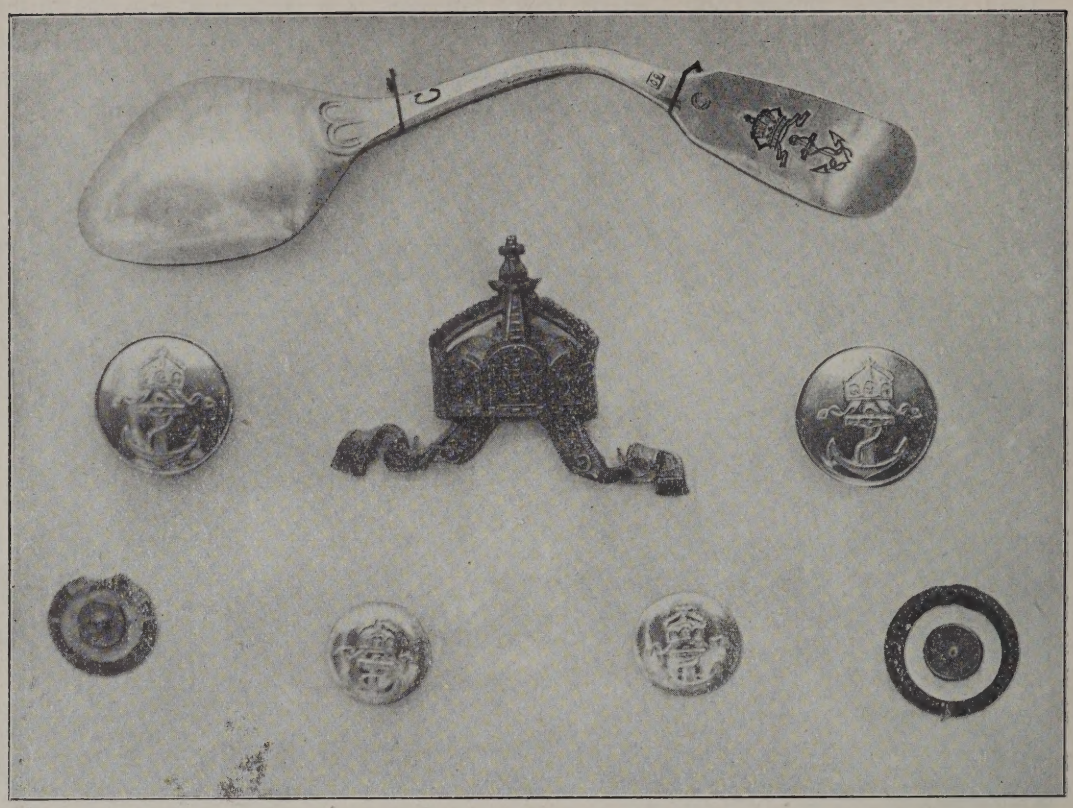
Built at Bremen, as already said, the vessel entered the service in the beginning of May 1915; it made its trial trip on the Weser, was towed by night through the Kaiser Wilhelm Canal, and reached Kiel on 17th May, where the first immersion trials were completed, and on the 22nd the mines intended for us were taken on board. Our war against Austria being declared, the vessel left Kiel by rail in three pieces, and arrived at Pola on 24th June. There it was again put together, and changed its flag, carrying out on 25th July and 15th August the mine laying in front of our base, lately mentioned. In the month of December the vessel left Cattaro for Port Bardia, near Solum in Cyrenaica, with a cargo of rifles to be handed to our rebels... This record merits particular attention, possibly?

In February 1916, in the difficult days at Durazzo, the *U. C. 12* was there-

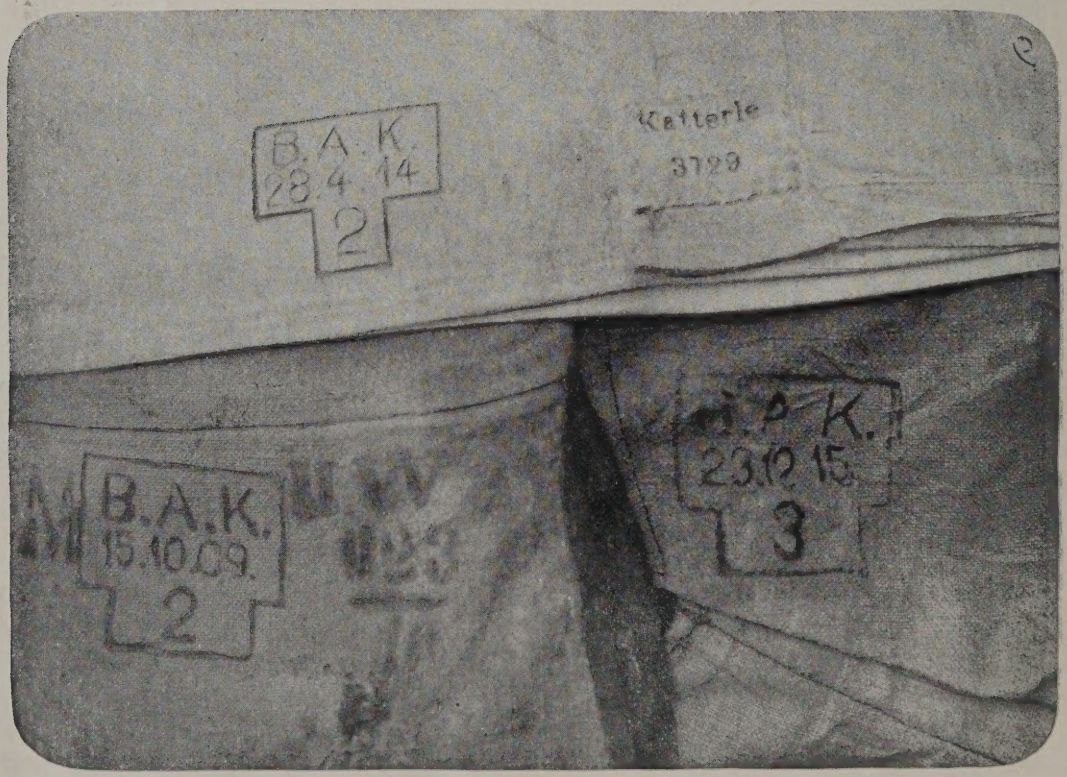


Cap ribbons of the crew of "U. C. 12"

abouts; this craft had succeeded in mine laying in the roadstead, and placed two lines which our ceaseless vigilance alone prevented from claiming victims, in spite of the extensive traffic among steamers and warships engaged in evacuating the Serbian army, and the transport of many thousands of Austrian prisoners captured by the Serbians during their earlier and victorious campaign. Having returned to Cattaro from Durazzo, she made next for one of our bases to study the approaches and methods of traffic. After this there was again a stay at Cattaro: the last anchorage, followed by the fateful going to sea and the latest voyage, the arrival in our inhospitable waters, and death.

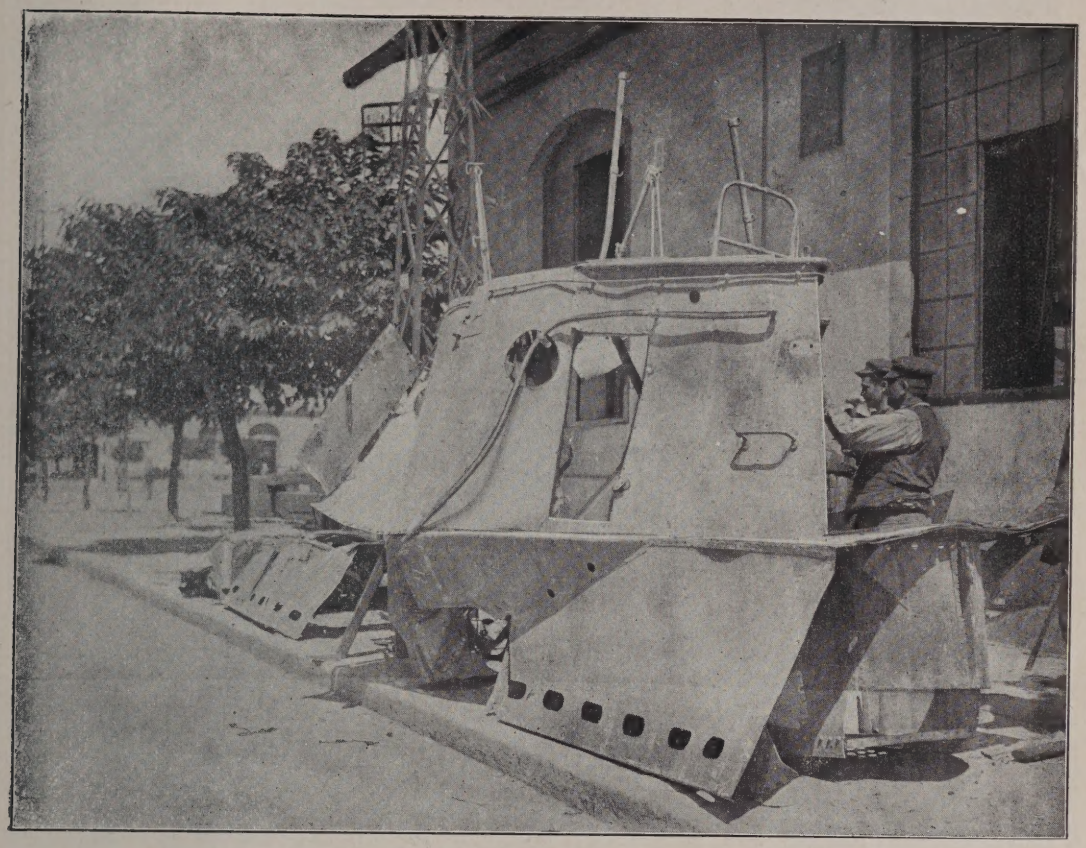


A spoon, badges and buttons from "U. C. 12", disctintive of German Naval officers.



Canvas garments of the sailors marked B. A. K. "Bekleidung Abteilung Kiel".

Dates and places are given in precise form, since there is not the smallest doubt as to the extent of injury done to us by *U.C.12*, and consequently as to that effected by Germany against us, long, very long before our declaration of war against that power. The dedication prefixed to these few pages of tragedy is therefore completely justified.

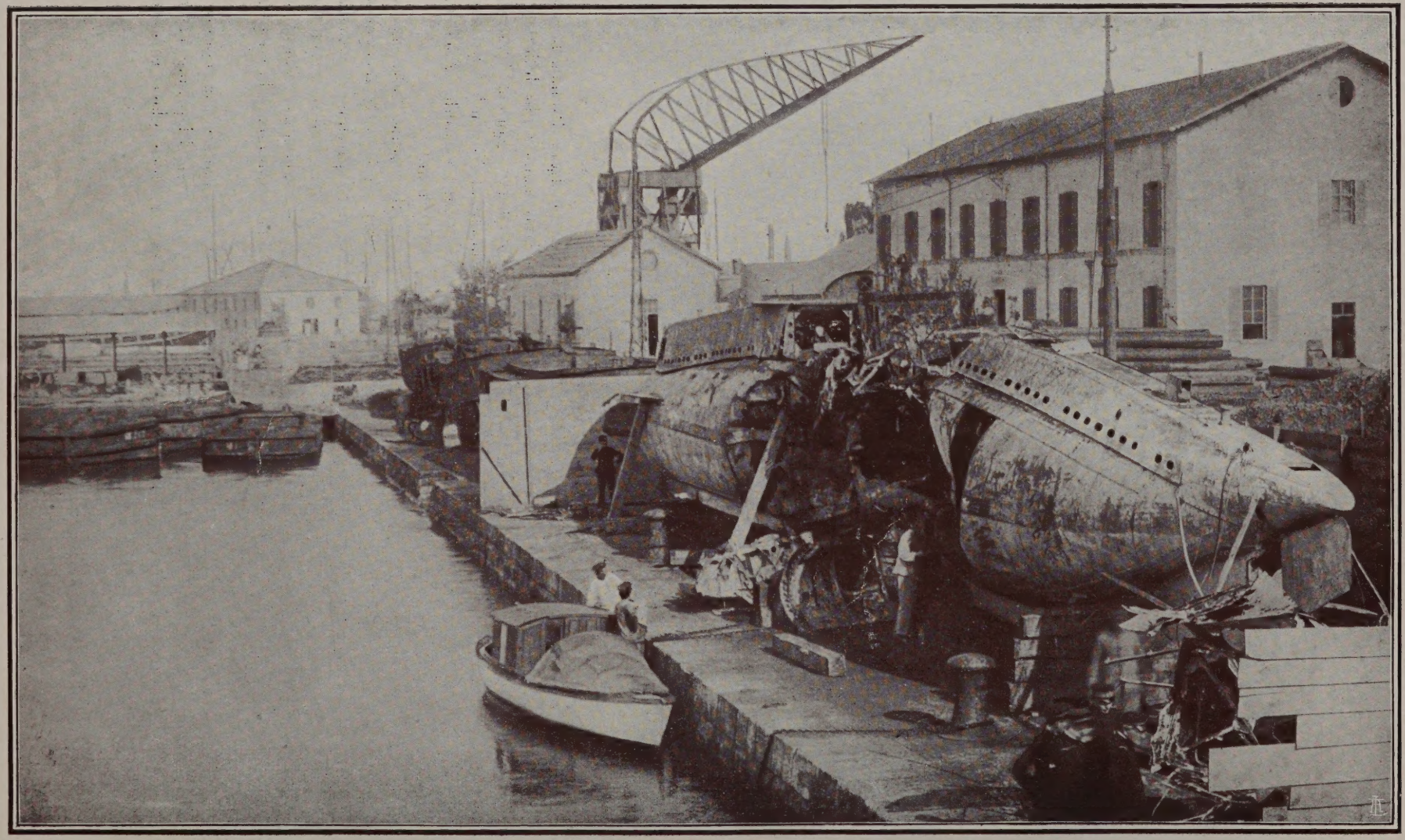


Italian workmen repairing the turret of "U. C. 12".

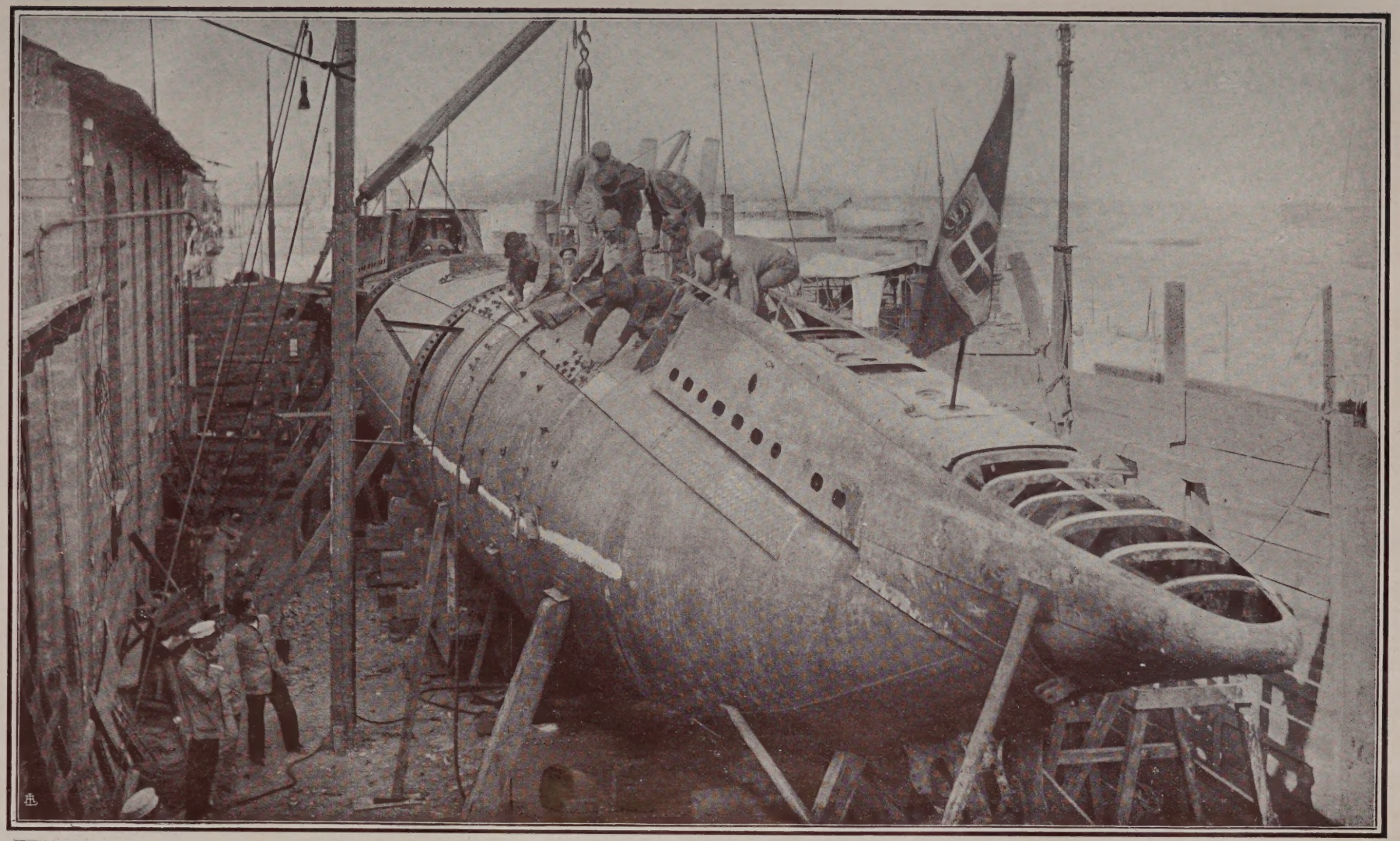
May eternal repose attend the souls of those who started from Bremen to find death in our seas, and whose shattered bodies lie in our land, namely the following: Ober leutenant Frohner, commandant of the *U. C. 12*; ing. Ober aspirant Hempel, second in command; U. Stenermann Zielinsky, Ober Maschmat Schmidt, Bertram, Weicht, Ober Bootsmut Vohs and Scherb; Oberbeizer Cohrs, Catterle, Aichele; Ob. F. T. Gast Bahr, to Able seamen Rolef, Mann, Neugebom.

To these victims of a foolish mentality, which all over the world holds up to derision the German with his hymns of hate, and with ferocity as his only recognised law, Italy, the queenly guardian of right and justice, generously proffers a peaceful word in the name of her equitable rule and of the sanctity of the war in which she is engaged. Holding strict guard against any renewal of the incendiary flames of Belgium, she replies to the attack of these incendiaries and murderers, bowing in silence before the unhappy crew of the *U. C. 12.*

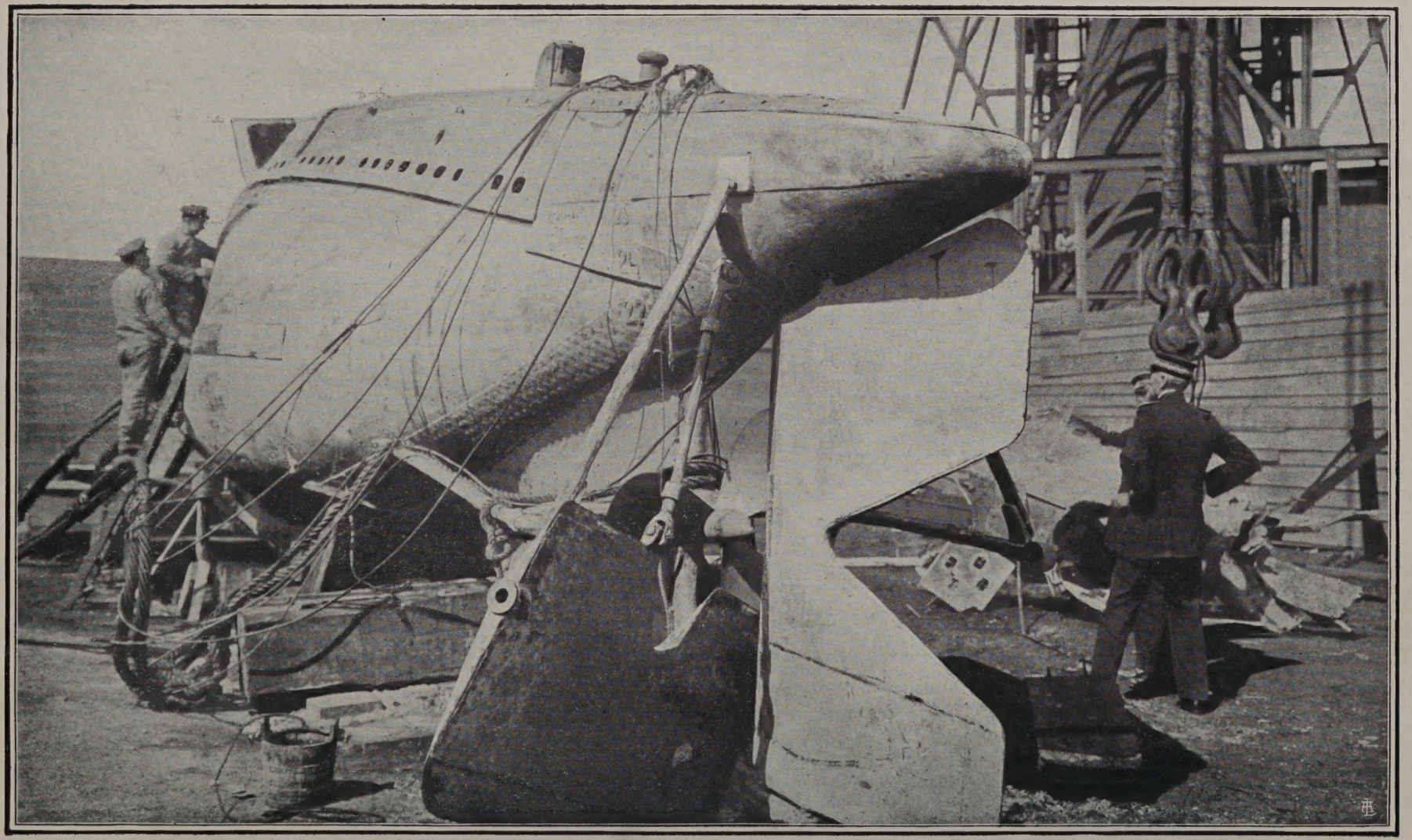
What about Austria? Well, Austria scarcely takes any part in this episode; for nothing of hers was sent to death except her flag; her own Hapsburg eagle, with its limbs torn in pieces. Which thing, as is well known, took place in order to delight the failing sight of the above mentioned bird...



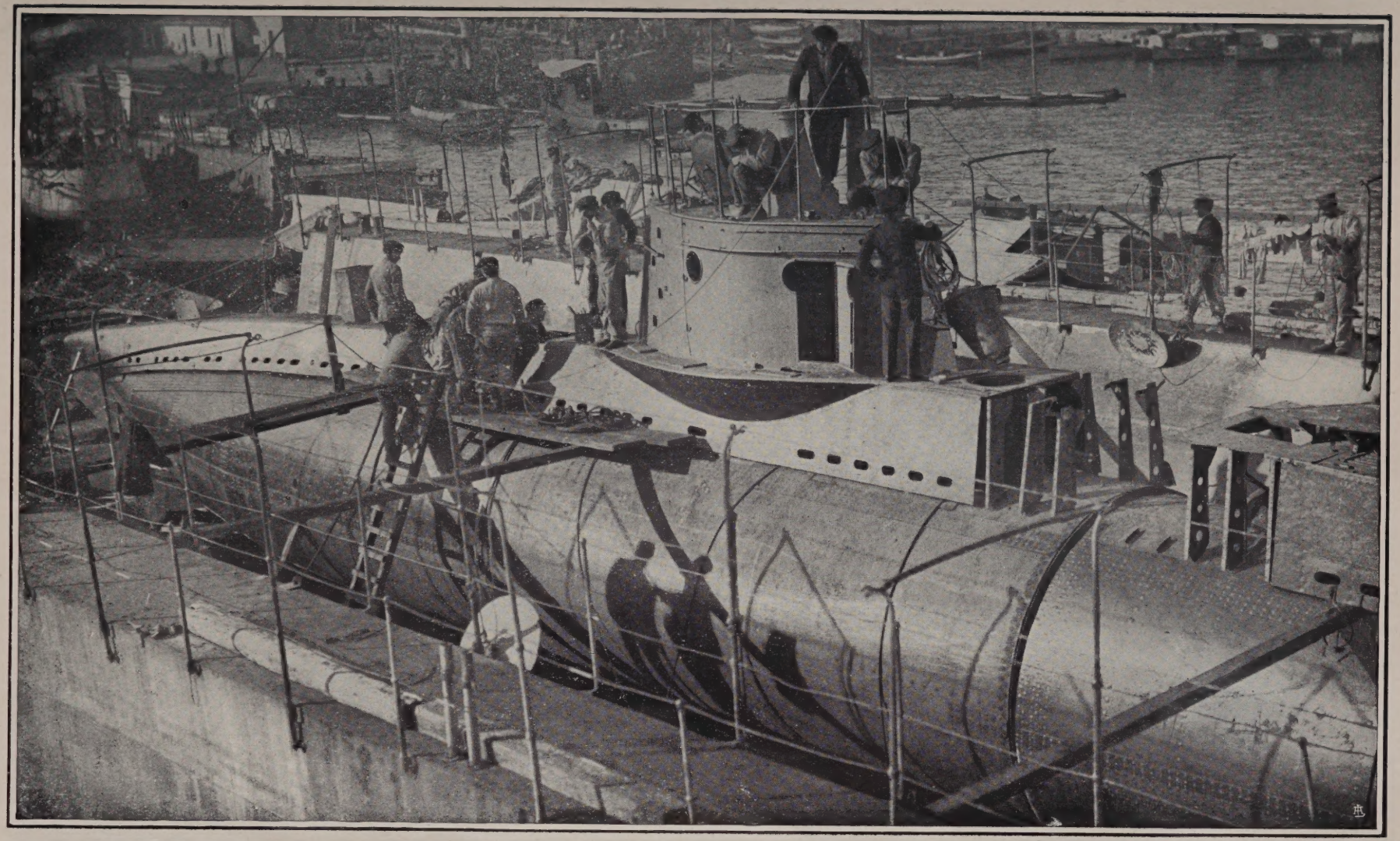
The "U. C. 12" lying on the quay.



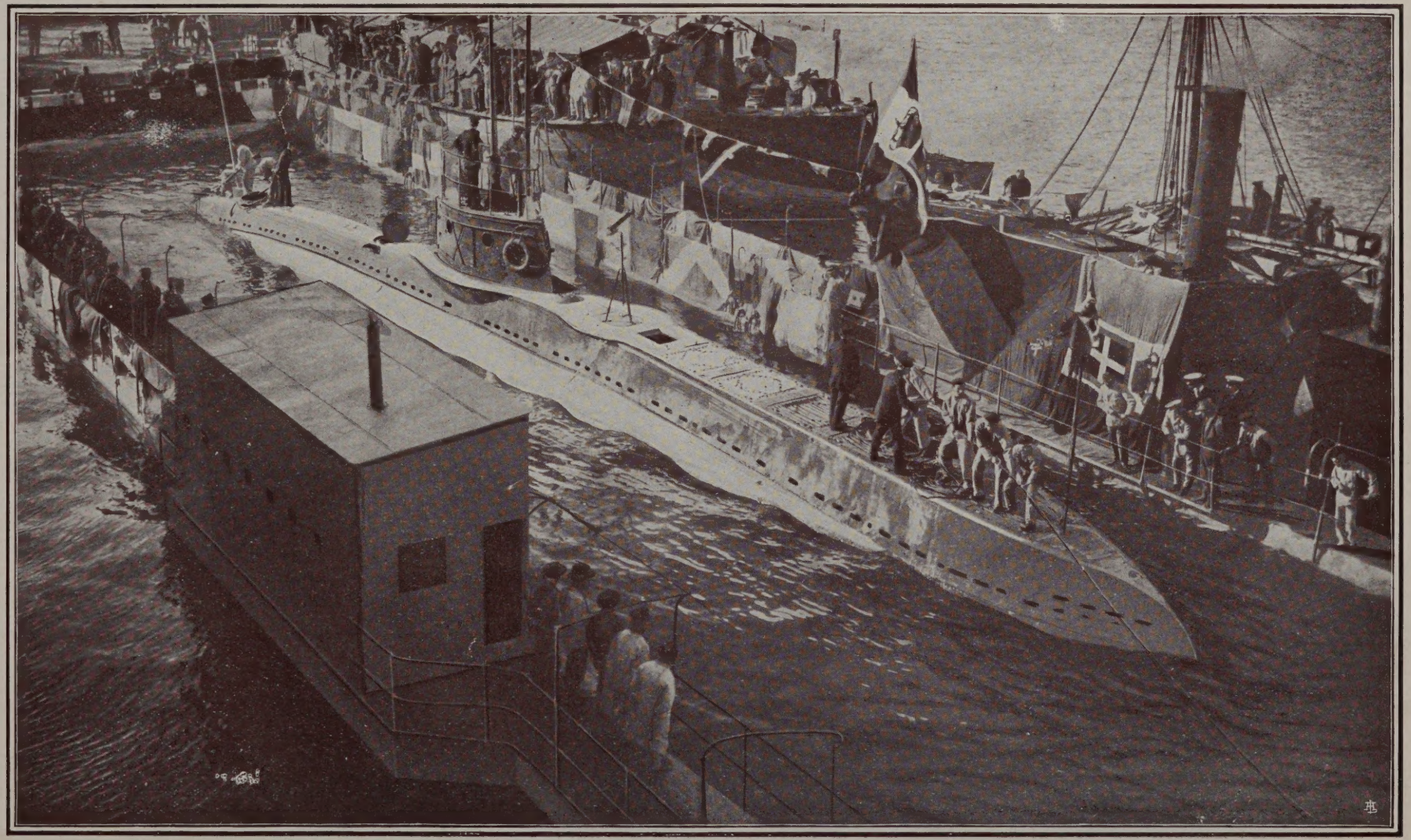
The rapid progress of repairs.



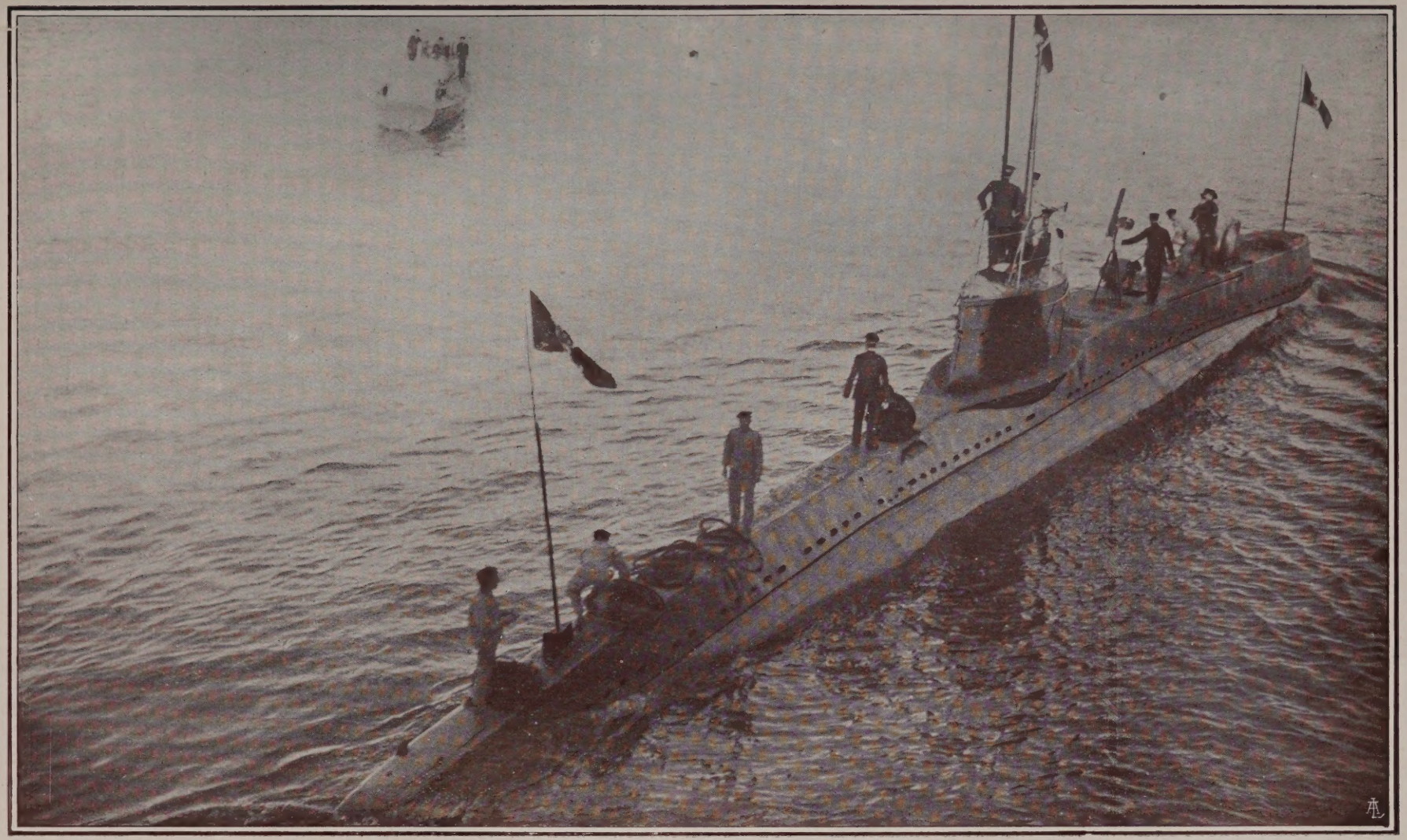
Repairing the hull.



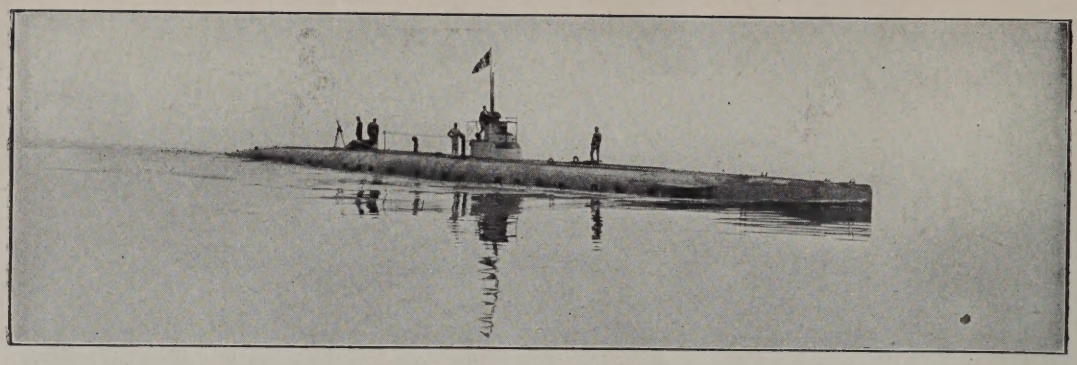
Finishing the repairs.



Launching the submarine, now under the Italian flag.



The submarine "U. C. 12" takes to the water, manned by Italian seamen.



The Submarine "Argo".

· OURS' ·

I.

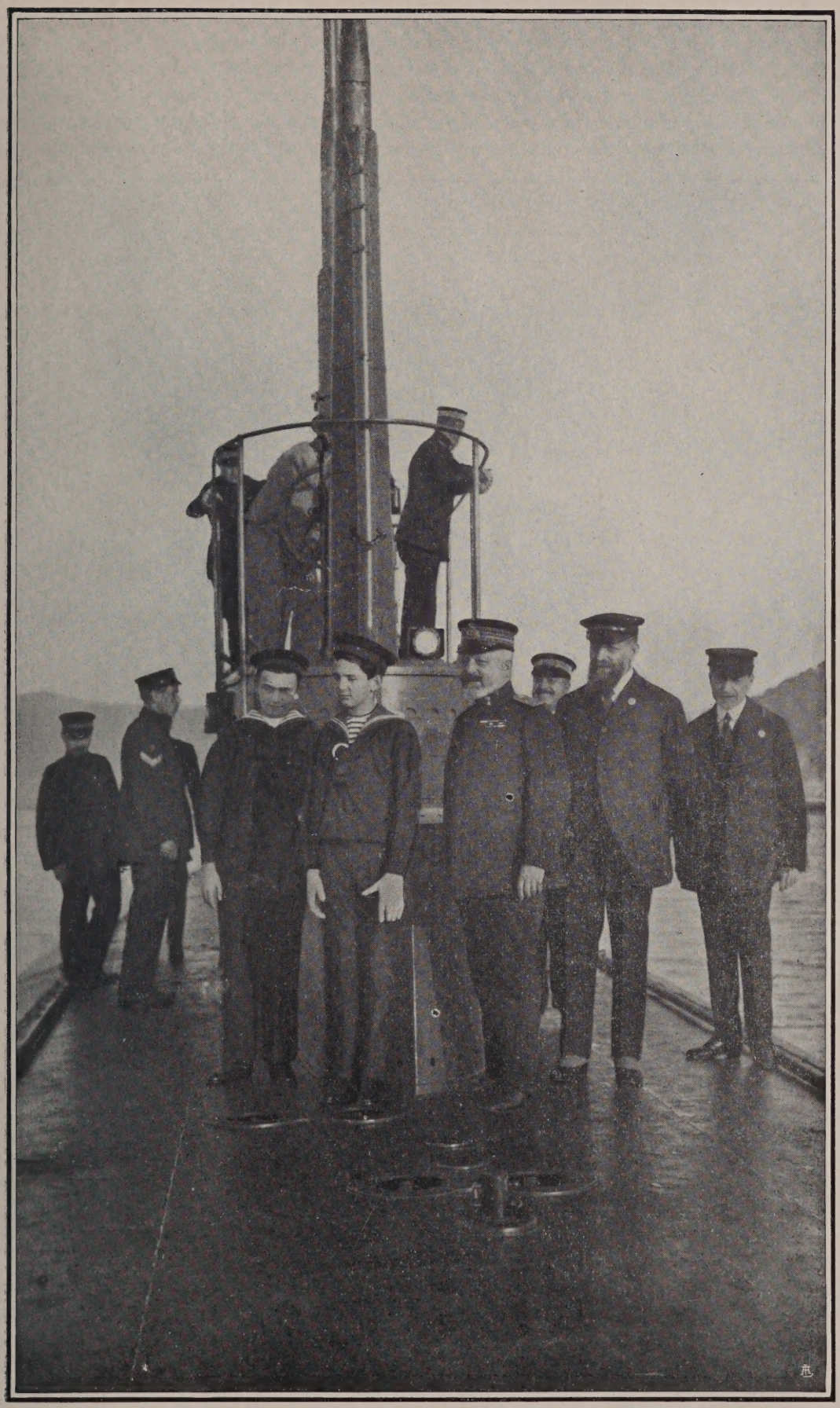
Among the purlieus of crime there are a few boys whose bodies seem weakly until their first evil experience is over, but who once immersed in wrong-doing make a rapid development in strength, quickly becoming quite unrecognisable. Just in this fashion did it happen with the submarine; after an infancy of misery and of very little promise, in a short time becoming a practised brigand of the sea, although the first blood had so recently been tasted. The leap was so rapid that at the beginning of the war neither we nor Austria ranked the submarine beyond the status of a child, apt for deeds not too far from the house, though outside of this, no submarine was allowed to do anything except brief port to port runs, and even then was prudently convoyed.

The power and the experience of the submarine consequently remained very limited. But when Austria began to come under the influence of its far-seeing ally and patron, their submarines took up a different attitude; we on our part during the interval when it was our business to get ready, had to do so much with the little that was ours, to face a situation which was prolonged through several months.

All such nursing of the submarines became a thing of the past. From those tiny bodies proceeded forth a gigantic spirit, and in the extremely severe conditions of life now imposed on them, there came into existence almost miraculous attributes at once redoubling their powers. Craft built only for defence and for protection of the coast and the ports, were transmuted by purely moral force into vessels of attack, and thereupon required to carry the war into enemy waters, penetrating the Adriatic in every sense of the word, until the last spark of vitality became exhausted, the vitality represented by the foe's power of offence.

They took a secondary place at the outset of the war, but at once they found themselves compelled to stretch the muscles of their little chests with the effort entailed in a titanic combat which immediately they had to sustain almost unaided.

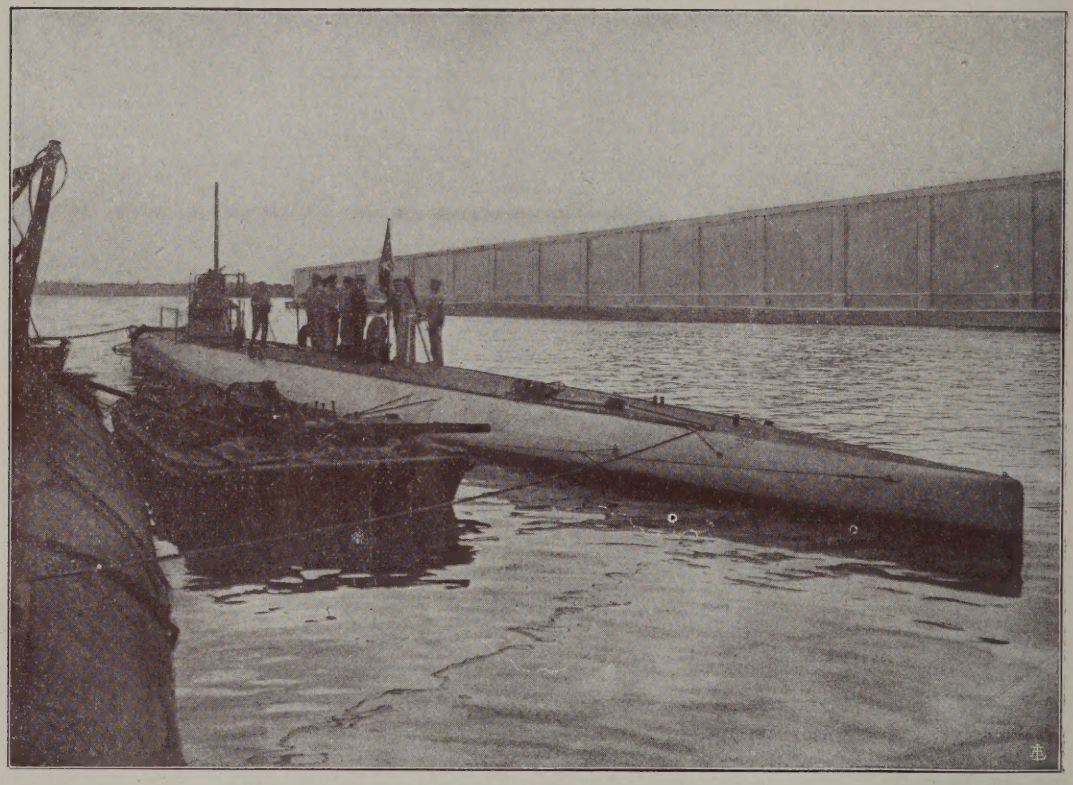
They alone were the blockaders at the straits which in rear of a multiple screen of islands might give access to the enemy at any point into the contested area of sea: they who in lengthened and most dangerous ambush were wont to wear out the periscope while defending ports or an immensely long unprotected coast: it was always they who insinuated themselves into every enemy channel, clipping close, as with a pair of scissors, all the contours of the headlands and poking their prows into the myriad bays which the generous hand of nature has bestowed on our Istria and Dalmatia. They were discovered, were chased, were trapped, were captured, bombarded, torpedoed, the mark of every sort of weapon, whether from overhead, from the surface of the sea, or from below. Some there were that became conscious of the scraping of



H. R. H. the Crown Prince on board of one of our submarines.

mine moorings against their sides, entangled, well knowing that malignant weapons were floating slowlyover their heads, only a few centimetres distant, grazing the upper deck with their shockers: those shockers the little lightning strokes, agents of a horrible death...

Others there were, rapidly descending to the bottom to escape the persistent attacks of torpedo craft, who there experienced the scraping of continually descending explosive hooks let down from above to try and find some holding point, and if the ter-



One of Ours.

rible fishing line should be successful then there would be a final scene in red and green... flame, blood and water... a confused mass in the fraction of a second.

There was one submarine whose commander had reason to remember the excited face and gestures of the commandant on board an Austrian destroyer, seen through the periscope as they were trying hard to submerge while they were within range of the enemy torpedo. Over there was this man protected by a shelter, calling on his gunners to stop firing from the upper deck of the destroyer, as they could not hit the target, now that she was so close.

Amid the noise of the guns his voice was not very easy for the men to hear, but the periscope reproduced correctly the gestures of irritation with which he accompanied his orders to throw down some special bombs. Presently with the crash of shell which he had managed to lodge in the body of our little creature, so fiercely chased, and subjected to prolonged thrills and shivering fits, there followed the penetrating blow which shook up severely all persons and things on board, carving round them the vacant alleys of death. Yet through all this, marvellously immune, we accomplished the submersion of our little creature, which lay in safety at the bottom, as quietly as a fox when his den is smoked.

Yet another, brought to the surface by reason of damage to the horizontal rudder, and sustaining such injury to the accumulators by the terrible list to the side that the interior was pervaded by the poisonous fumes of chloral. At the surface she found herself in the full light of day at only a few hundred yards distance from powerful enemies, within range of hundreds of guns, but was miraculously taken back to the depths through the extraordinary coolness of her commandant.

There would be no difficulty in naming each combatant, in dating each episode, but this would be a useless enterprise. The entire Adriatic within definite limits of latitude and longitude as assigned by our sailors and by those whose record will nevermore come to light, has witnessed a brotherhood of men who go into action as already described, men whose mien has become placid from frequent acquaintance with the hand of death. To speak plainly, these men are the commandants of our submarines. It was on account of their presence that Austria, raking over the sea with its ravenous claws, was compelled to collect all its belongings in order to shut up its ships in the inaccessible coves and the multiplied mine-fields, placing barriers along its coasts even in the most unlikely places inasmuch as these nameless gentlemen are fully capable of dealing with unexpected situations, gentlemen who with the greatest ease overcome every obstacle, who in company with their comrades on the surface have found their way into Trieste, Parenzo, Pola, Fiume, Antivari, S. Giovanni di Medua and Durazzo, picking up the scent along the whole coast, breaking in everywhere, penetrating into all mysteries of explosives and of steel.

II.

Names? From the depths of the sea arise many names which will live in story. They belonged to those young frames destroyed by torpedo and by mine, dissolved in the waters, carried far by the wave and left here and there on the sands.

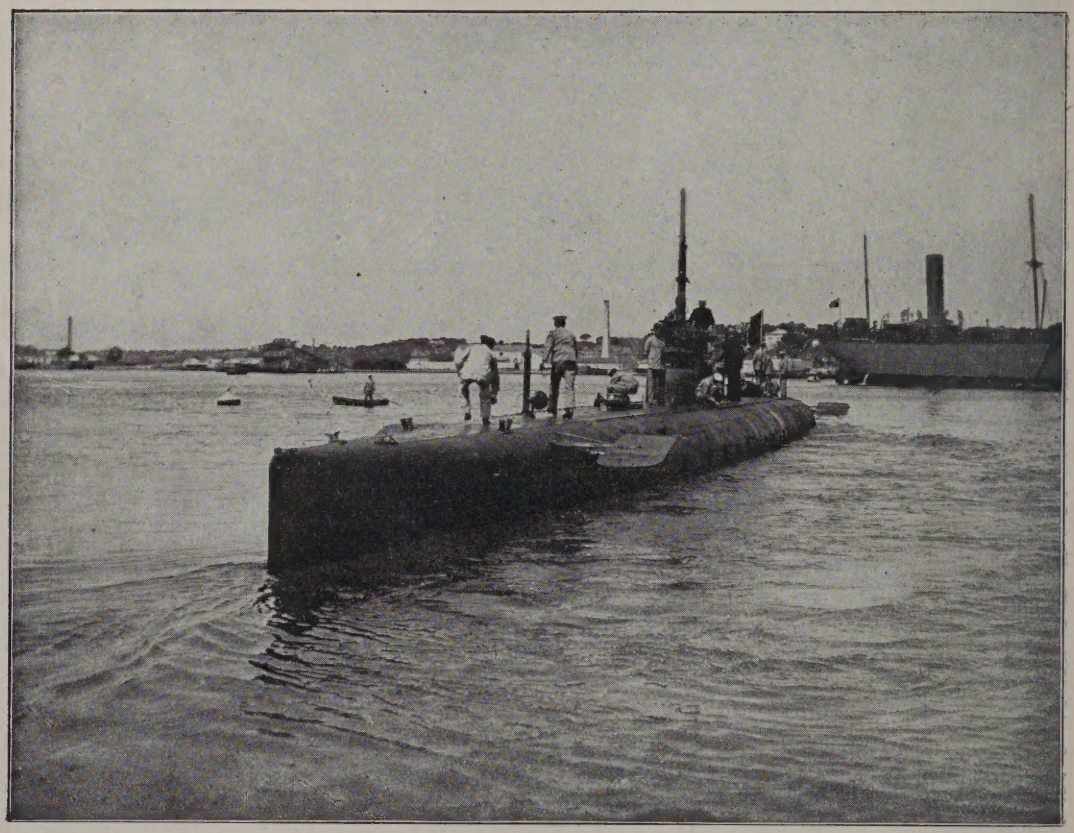
One of the small submarines being hoisted from the quay into the water.

Bow your heads, ye who look upon the Adriatic, a grim cemetery bereft of crosses and of the cypress tree of mourning. Meditate then, scrutinize the deceitful azure expanse which has drowned so many cries which has become so ensanguined, making no sign although it conceals in its depths so many forms of death.

Once more, you might watch for the appearance over those waters of Grado of the pallid features of Ernesto Giovannini, that Grado at the extreme point of the

Austrian cavity from whose furthest deeps Trieste implores us striving to reach the outstretched hand, while we are unfolding little by little the covering containing a precious object never to be lost again. You may glimpse then Ernesto Giovannini emerging from his *Jalea* wrecked on a mine that struck the ship when submerged, his whole form raises itself to the surface, and is the plaything of the waves in the tremendous current of Gracala. Hidden at his feet lies his iron coffin, his ship so torn on the left side, a bone of contention owing to the belt of mines threatening anyone who attempted to move it: and it remains ours'. In the interior still float some dead things, slowly circling, some comrades of the hero forming a ghastly crown, as if on the pedestal of some strangely constructed monument.

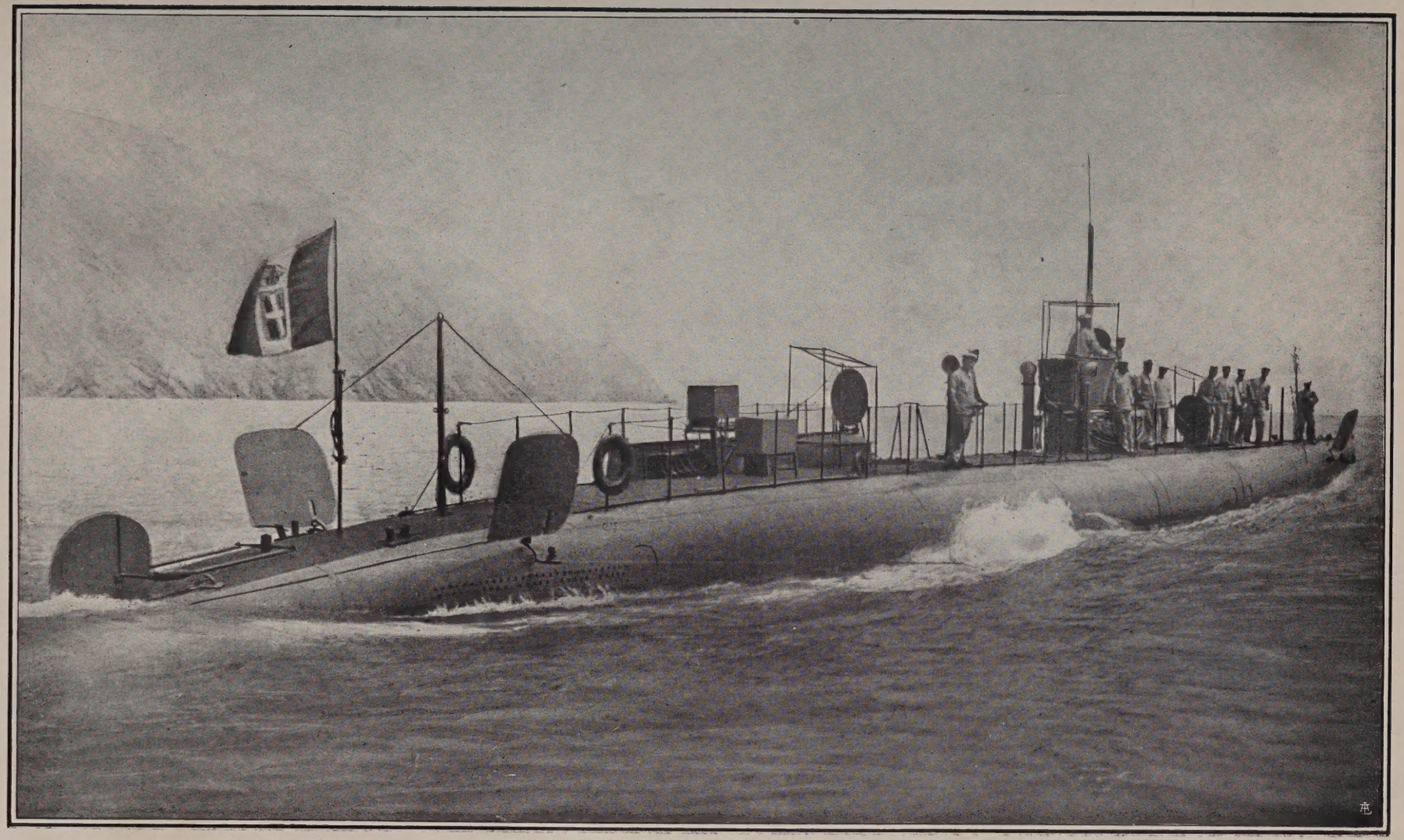
With eyes fixed on the far distance he seems to be searching for those others cast up by the sea one by one, on the shores of Grado, of S. Michele del Tagliamento, of Caorle, of Chioggia, of S. Margarita, as if planning for the impartial



A submarine under weigh.

allotment of the corpses of Italian martyrs throughout the more extended Italy. Where is the lieutenant-of-vessel Cavalieri, the second in command of the *Jalea*? Where are the electrician Modelese, chief torpedo officer, and the seaman Giacometti? Why are not they in company at the fatal post of honour, so close to the waters of Trieste that none has yet excelled the heroism of these deaths by sea? Where, too, is Vietri, torpedo officer in the destroyer? Look: a white cloud of sea-mews is flying round and round the monument, shrieking the while. These birds make the reply; for they saw it all; these birds tell us in their harsh language what mariners intend to accomplish, and what none but mariners of every clime are able to carry through.

O true Italian commandant, whose life was one jocund spirit of service in your Navy, and whose veins pulsated in unison with each beat of the engine of your submarine as if they had been invisible organs in aid of the war, it is no fault of yours if all these men of renown are not with you where you lie. We saw them



The " Jalea ".

rise from the deep through a small open porthole of the *Jalea*, together with the last reserves of air which came up, joining with your own last sigh. We saw them strive, each helping the other to keep death at a distance, each effort in aid of another wasting somewhat of his own energy, and so coming near to the fatal moment when the chief fell back to drown, with green phantoms floating before the eyes. Then little by little, as they drifted far from the *Jalea,* we saw one after another cease to strive, leaving not even a ripple on the surface, merely repeating with arms opened as on a cross, the motion of the waves. Long time we wheeled about, in separate groups above them as we are wont to do; then night itself took charge of them...

But just one continued to live, as if he had in himself, by miraculous power, gathered up all the vitality on board the *Jalea.* We saw him spread out on the water and rather dazed momentarily after the terrible explosion, but calm and tranquil, swimming, helping a comrade who wished to get free of his clothes. But there was yet another in worse case, struggling to take off his boots, such a hindrance in swimming: this was Cavalieri, lieutenant of vessel, and the wonderful swimmer came to his aid. Then he swam back to the comrade whom he had helped to undress just before, recalled to his side by an anguished cry that he was dying, and held him up until he could not but perceive that he was only holding a corpse...

Afterwards he looked round him to see if any others wanted help. More were round about him, small dark spots coming up every minute upon the callous surface of eternal azure, but his shouts met with no response. He alone remained as a messenger of this Marathon of disaster... and all alone he swam in the direction of Grado, towards New Italy. He swam on, for hours together...

Yet to his widely open eyes, behold, Grado never seemed to come nearer. His weariness may have been the cause of it, but the houses seemed to become smaller, the colours palers, and his haven of safety appeared to hide itself mockingly on the far horizon. No: truly Grado was farther away, and he had become nothing better than an inert body which the current was dragging back towards the enemy.

Then, by another miracle, the messenger of the *Jalea* was still able to use his reasoning powers. Within his poor brain weakened by the contact with so huge a mass of mortality, his determination did not waver: that organic matter, now so near to dissolution and to a return to nothingness, when the thin flame that we call life was exposed to danger, still obeyed tranquilly the calls on its functions. He must not exert himself any more: he must turn his back on safety, and allow the current to waft him towards the enemy, he must conserve his energies: the reflux current would come, and then he would have to swim strongly to regain the lost ground...

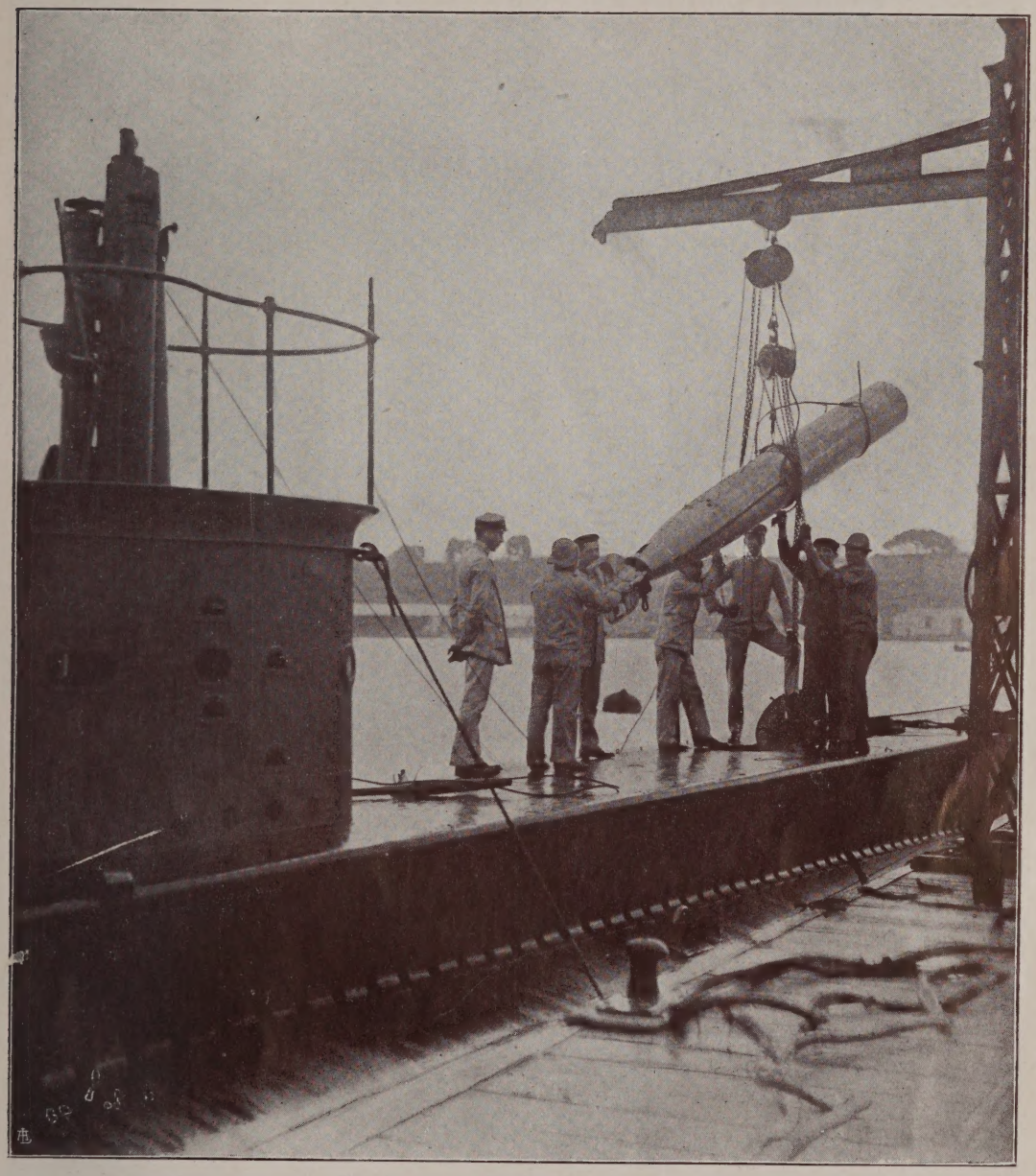
He carried out this plan: drifting with slight movements towards the enemy, in the calm assurance gained by study of a definite method.

It was now night, but a very calm night. Myriads of stars twinkled in the sky and beckoned silently towards the sorrowful planet which happens to be the abode of mankind. Jupiter alone, as if influenced by a probability of relationship, seemed to draw near to our earth, thus forming the only exception to the stellar unconcern in our affairs; he cast upon this sea without horizon a golden line of light, straight as a sword, the scriptural sword with a point of flame.

There is silence, the silence of an empty world, with nothing beyond a slight eddy in the water, impatient of this black floating object... He was alone with the golden sparks of the universe that danced in strange measures and at random, while for him it was a matter of hours and the last picture of the series must be death.

All at once an immense shaft of light, white but having nothing in common with the Light of Creation, broke upon the blackness of the night. It shone out from the extreme point of that misshapen portion of the planet which is called Austria, and so near to the man that it almost dazzled his eyes. To swim thither with the current inshore meant unquestionably a return to life. One cry would suffice and

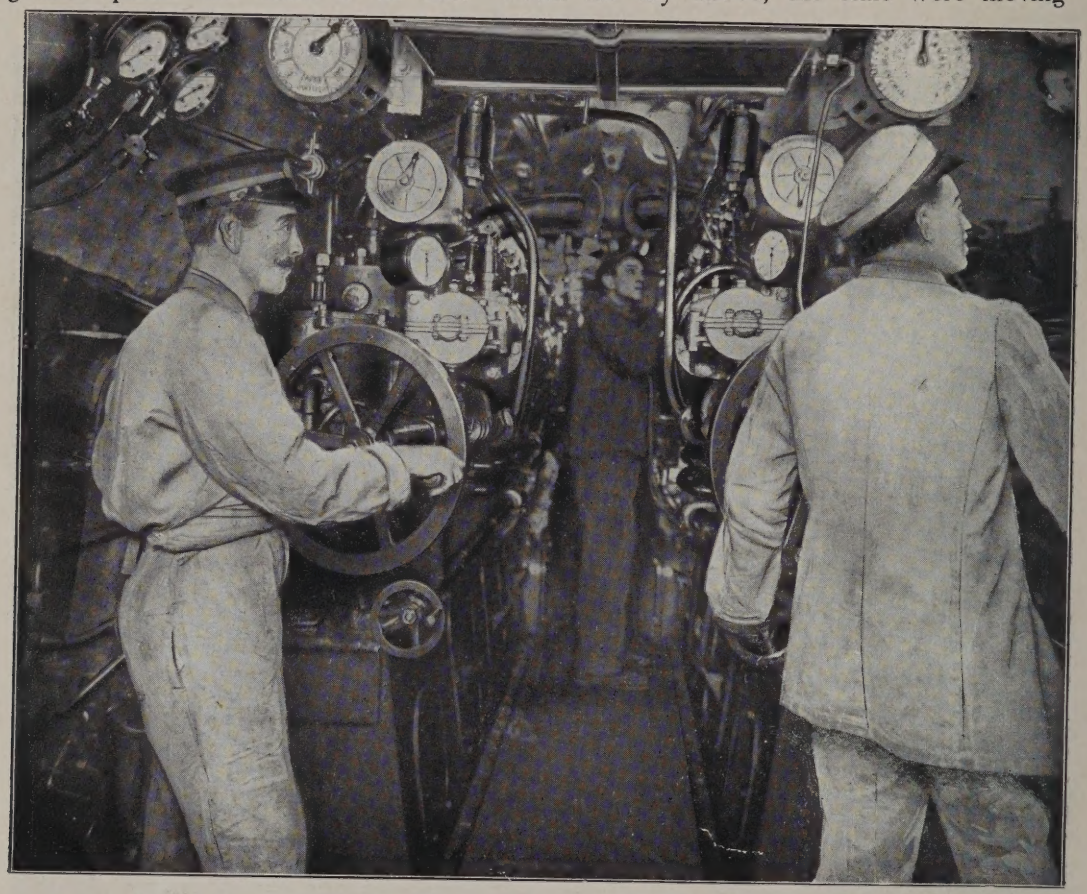
this poor frame would find a place of rest from the ghastly conflict... Truly among enemies, but on solid ground, where are nourishment and warmth, where the sinews would be soaked no more, where refreshing sleep might take the place of that which must be eternal... But his soul did not for an instant listen to the idea propounded by the failing body. No: let all call to mind these words which he spoke on the Adriatic, and so passed on by the intermingling of every sea to every shore throughout the world "No: I will die, but with those people never will I live as a prisoner", so said the surviver of the *Jalea,* as with a gliding motion he turned away from the prospect of living.



Shipping a torpedo aboard a submarine.

Midnight. He had been in the water for more than ten hours: his skin showed swellings and his hands had become viscid. His eyes and throat were parched with the salt, and a maddening thirst brought to boiling point by the mockery of the water washing all round him, produced a sibilation in his breathing, and dark visions in his brain. Still he swam on, in the darkness, guided by streaming lights from the reflectors searching over the sea at his back: while all at once it seemed as if this illumination shone upon strange beings nestled on the wave in front, beings that came from we know not where, yet with human features... crowds of well known faces.

From this crowd two faces grew larger, came nearer for a moment, fixing their wide open eyes upon him, in intensity of terror, then instantly disappearing: presently coming again, his mother and his sister... No: now there were no more faces: all was void and deserted around his watery calvary: no shapes reappeared now, for the reflux current had begun, and the light of the enemy reflectors was growing dimmer in the distance. Jupiter had sunk beneath the horizon, and the dancing of the golden sparks had come to an end. From the sky above, the stars were moving



Aboard a submarine - Internal combustion engines.

downward as in a death struggle. He swam on, swam as it were with his spirit strong as a giant: whither? and for how long?

Now look: the immensity of blackness, the shadow of death which had enveloped him is pierced by the first pallid light of dawn. From a stratum of grey mist which was resting on the surface of the sea, there came out rectangular spots, dark in colour and placed in line upon a yellow patch, still without shape and apparently nothing more than a bank of cloud of an unusual colour. But it was... land... and what... "Grado!" whispered the messenger from the *Jalea* between teeth chattering with the cold that seemed to have its origin in the very marrow of his bones.

What was this black object which floated above the surface and moved slightly to and fro, with what seemed to be a plaintive cry?

"The buoy of Grado..." There was no obscurity of intellect yet to mar his perfect comprehension. Grado, the buoy at Grado. Ready: he gathered up his last efforts, for he felt himself going to die...

In the milk-white silences of dawn now suffused with a tinge of rose colour, he uttered his first cry, for he had come back to Italy. We hurried up and flew round him, encouraging him, trying to be of use to anyone who heard his cry in finding the point whence it came, by the sight of our crowd of birds. Where we are there is always something in the water.

" Help!.. " Grado was stupified by this voice which seemed to come from some invisible water sprite. A motor boat came out and went round hither and thither, aimlessly and with distrust. Was the man who called, coming on a rightful errand?

" Who are you? " their calls came to him from far off.

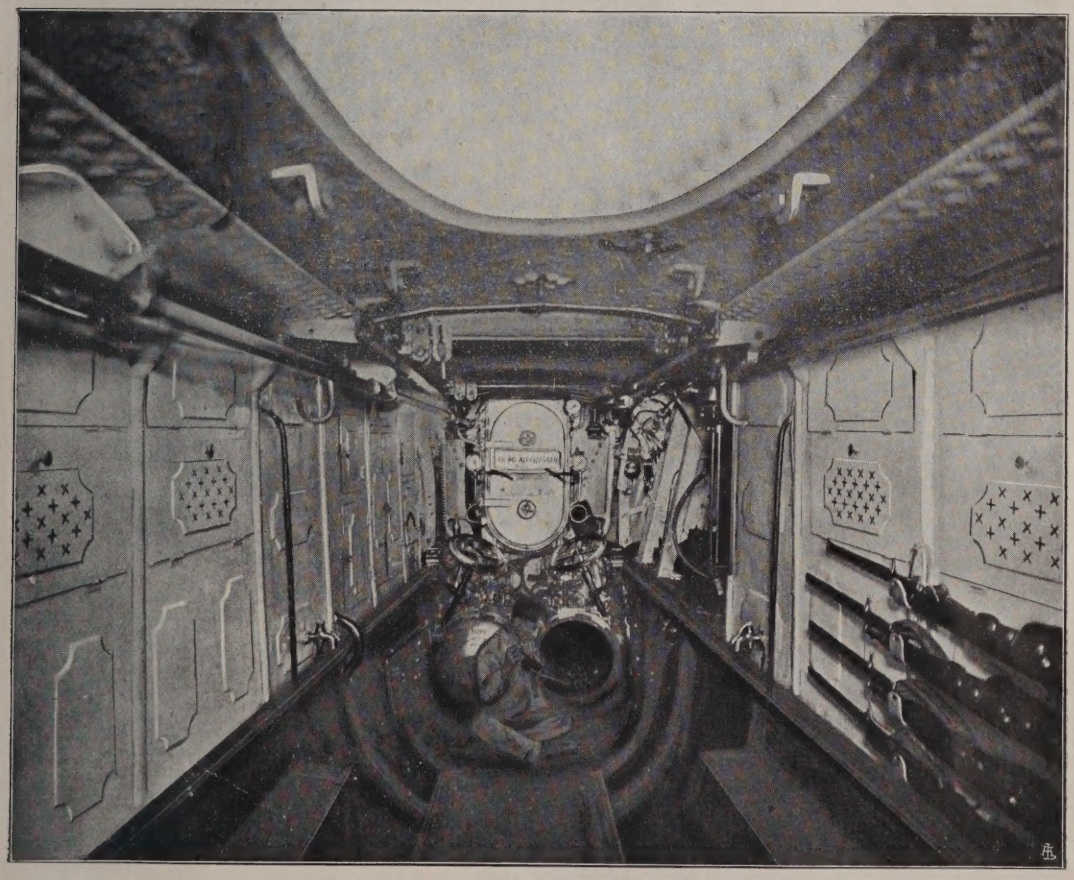
His own name was nothing in comparison with that of his dead ship.

" *Jalea* ", he answered.

Emotion seized the voices of the rescuers, and imparted a sadness to them. *Jalea*? The submarine sunk yesterday? " Courage ", they cried, and then could not add another word. Then happened this wonderful thing:

Raising both arms from that sea wherein they had been spread out for fourteen hours, lifting with a last effort his chest from the murderous waters, throwing back his head with an upward gaze towards the heavens, splendid and ardent as some conception of Michael Angelo, with all the Italian spirit in the voice: " Viva l' Italia ", mightily cried this one survivor of a score of heroes, thrown up from the abyss amid a welter of fire and water, and victor over death. So they gathered him in.

Peacefully he slept in the hospital bed, whither he was conveyed. But in his seeming sleep there were thrills that passed over his face with spasms of unconsolable sorrow, and then his lips would open, and those who thronged round him could hear three words and no more, constantly repeated as if from some grief of mind: " *Jalea*... all over... "



Aboard a submarine - The torpedo chamber.

Then as the mournful unconsciousness was passing away, he spoke a few words more, with eyes closed and teeth clenched:

" Yes I will die, but never will I survive in the hands of those people... "

. . . . . .

Take heed, all you men of Italy... At the narrative which these birds told to air, the commandant of the *Jalea* moved his lips, and smiled with the wan smile of the dead.

"Arturo Vietri?" he demanded. "A destroyer? and what of him?" From out of the north-east wind, which dispersed the clouds above waves that have travelled from Trieste, from the sea mews which balance themselves above anything black that their sharpest of sight discovers floating on the surface, from the melancholy horizon afforded by the Adriatic at the sands of Sdobba, of Duino, Sistiana, Miramare, from the mountains of Istria as well as from those of Italy, comes the reply of assent. But what is this ominous noise which seems to shake the earth, all round from Monfalcone to the mountain curtain that shuts off the northward view?

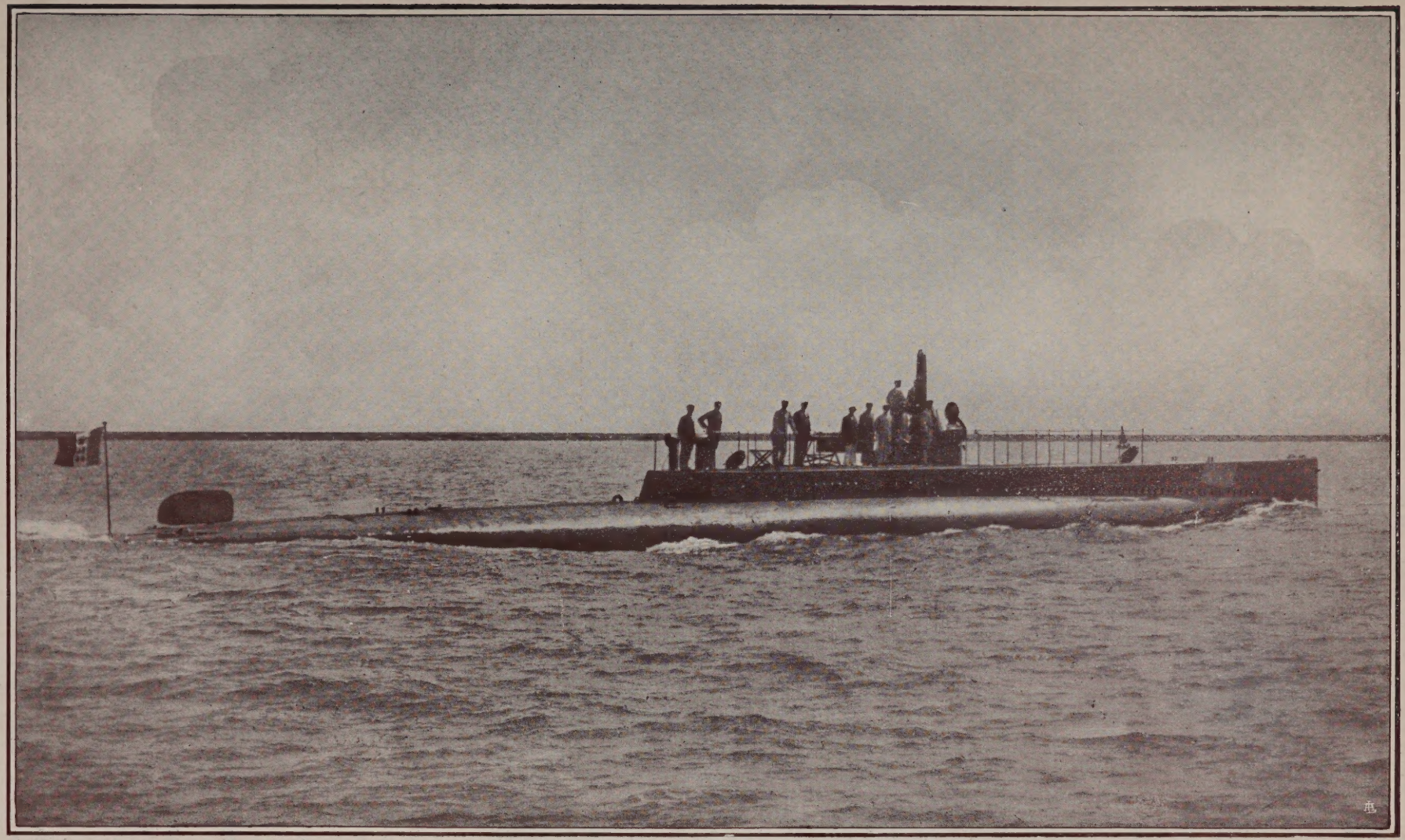
It is the cannon of the Carso. Behold the smile of pride on the lips of the commandant of the *Jalea* passes away with a shudder, as he turns his pallid countenance towards the far off conflict: behold round his feet are coming up from the sea the company of his dead ones: all their arms so wasted by the waves are lifted, dripping still, all the lips are parted: leader and followers, brought to life by the divine flame of Italian patriotism, repeat the cry for which they were content to die in faith: "Forward, O brothers on land!"

Aboard a submarine - In the control chamber - Electric motors.

III.

Pelagosa: a desolate rock, situated almost in the centre of the Adriatic as if escaped from the hands of nature at the moment of creation of the continents. In days of peace it became useful to mankind by the existence of its lighthouse, a guide for the navigator. There was a little church, where some one rejected by the great world might pray all the more intently in his solitude, and might suppose himself abandoned, inasmuch as the words of the prayer, overborne by the fierce winds, might seem to stop short in their ascent to heaven.

Neverthless the rock is Italian: but, being forgotten by treaty makers in its poverty, Austria was apt to take possession of what did not belong to her, for purely Austrian reasons. The war had only just begun when an opportunity for its recapture came, and so it was ours again after a sudden attack. As nothing excites the Austrian type of mind more strongly than the loss of property wrongfully acquired, our enemy attempted twice a hurried shelling, sending on this trifling enterprise considerable forces, ready for flight on the first sign of Italian smoke on the horizon, after the fashion of robbers terrified by their own act. It is said that one attack



The "Nereide".

was beaten off by a few sailors in an emergency rock trench, excavated halfway up the slope, and already rendered nearly useless by the infernal bombardment from many craft at close range.

In any event, to maintain possession of this rock, it was requisite to send everything day by day: men, munitions, water, food and medicines,—a matter not easily accomplished in war time, to a rock lying far from any base,—necessitating a continuous movement of ships and transport, always an easy target for the enemy. Pelagosa, left to its fate, deserted by ourselves and the enemy alike, is a no-mans'-land covered with steel splinters and dyed with blood of both combatants.

IV.

At this date the commandant of the submarine *Nereide* was captain of corvette Carlo del Greco, and his second in command lieutenant of vessel Corrado Boggio. Taking turns with a French submarine, the *Nereide* was on patrol duty at Pelagosa, expecting to get in a good stroke against a certain enemy craft that frequented those waters. To act as moorings for submarines, a buoy was fixed at an inlet of the island, well inshore and surrounded by rocks, though in tolerably deep water. The extreme danger of a trip to Pelagosa was well known, inasmuch as the presence of our submarines was easily ascertainable even when far below the surface, for the absolute clearness of the water made them very visible to any hydroplanes. A French boat had been followed up, chased and then bombarded from above, though fortunately in vain.

But to think of arguing about an order received was something quite impossible to the commandant of the *Nereide*, who in addition to a jovial turn of mind much endearing him to his comrades, was noted for his purposeful firmness. The order for another trip to Pelagosa was received with the classic stoicism of sailors, ready to dare anything, for they continually risk life and its belongings. The ship is the thing that goes everywhere, and when the order "full speed ahead" is given, the man becomes himself nothing more than one of the machines in the complex system that is now in motion.

Yet for every living being there comes with the approach of death some inevitable presentiment, taking its rise in a mysterious way. Commandant and second in the *Nereide*, both in the full warmth of life, were sensible of a chilly breath never previously experienced, and to which they did not care to give a name: and to those who saw them start, and hailed from the quay with the customary playful wishes, they seemed to have something of sadness in their farewell smile. They were gone: the inimical loneliness of the sea became nothing but an antechamber, leading by way of a vast hall of darkness to the fields of light whence no return is possible.

However the voyage, though prolonged, afforded no particular incident but such as is common during bad weather, and in the grey dawn Pelagosa became visible in its death-like solitude, a sombre goal. As the *Nereide* had on board a few boxes for the small force on the island, they made for the buoy, steering so that the stern might be towards shore, and giving notice by megaphone to the sailors on the land so that they might be of use in getting these boxes landed.

Nothing was in sight. The sea was entirely free for the sweep of the waves which were piling themselves up all the way from the horizon, like some immense flock of sheep in full flight.

The top of the poop was already free, and a part of the crew including the two officers had disembarked on the sand while some repairs were done. Then between two waves they saw something, hardly noticeable, though it was not carried along with the seaway, but taking a contrary course of its own. A round box? A lance?

Instantaneously voice and motion ceased. There was no one who gazed at the strange visitor, and all had seen it, who did not know at once the meaning of what they saw. It was the periscope of a submarine. It came on slowly, as slowly as a shark, that most malevolent of sea monsters, travelling in the curve planned by

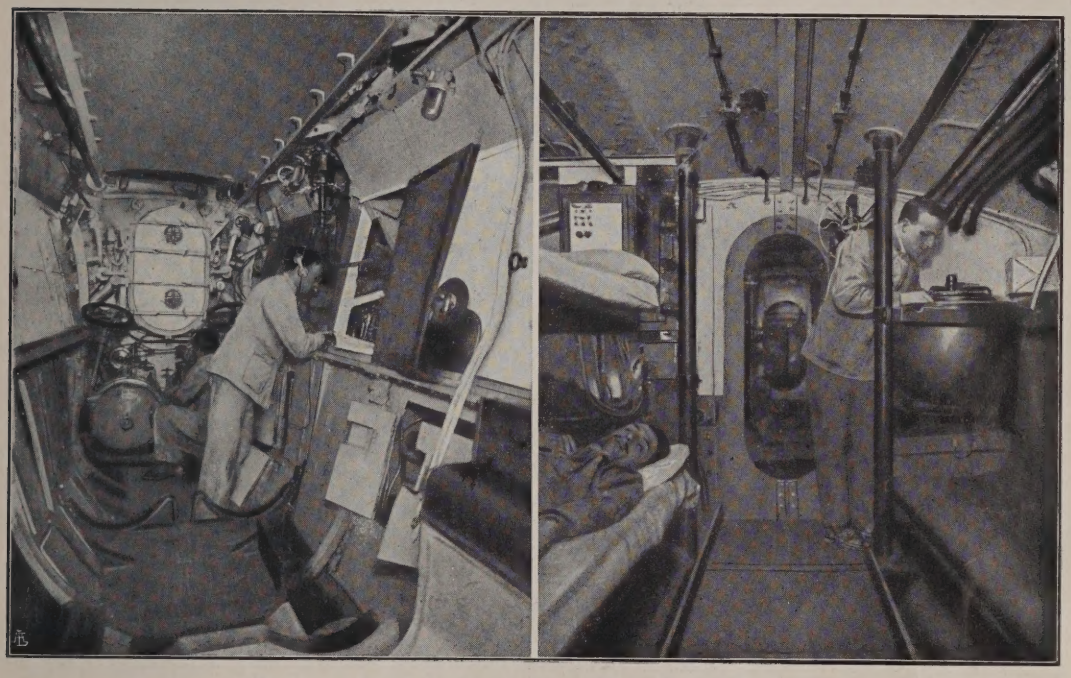
the great creature underneath, and steered across the run of the waves, in order that the right position may be attained, the position for dealing death.

It is the work of an instant to decide on the heroic course. The impuls towards sublimity must be accepted, otherwise it vanishes with any attempt at discussion. So in that moment of terrible silence, the fate of the *Nereide* was decided upon. Impossible to find time for casting off the moorings, for submerging, for firing, in any way for getting even with the enemy in readiness for action and thus beating off the cowardly Austrian. If the officers and crew remained ashore, their personal safety was a certainty; surely it was useless to fil with living beings the doomed vessel... It was the decisive moment. Carlo del Greco seized it, and so did all of them.

" On board " he cried.

He was the first to step on to the deck, truly a step from safety into certain death. All of them followed in a line of a score; the proud Italian blood impelled them to die with him the same terrible death.

Yet when they reached the deck they attempted the impossible in trying to



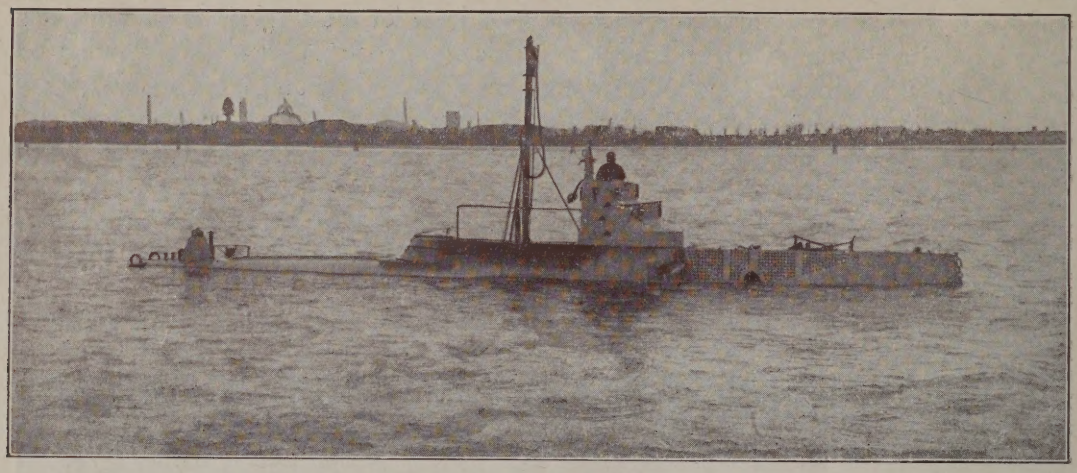
Wireless on board a submarine at sea. An officer at the compass.

submerge the *Nereide* in time. Commandant, second in command, crew, all alike threw themselves down the ladders, with " make all fast above "... I think of their last glimpse of outside... I, who had in Carlo di Greco my dearest comrade, and amid changes of shipmates had learned to value Corrado Boggio, could picture their looks at the moment of shutting themselves into the control room, the chamber of death. Those features doubtless lighted up by the red electric lamps as orders were given for filling the double bottom, while the seconds of time were seemingly prolonged to hours, and perhaps that enemy periscope had already completed its curve:

Still a few more seconds, and then only a very few more... Already below water fore and aft... the turret was beginning to disappear... Then a terrible explosion breaking in pieces the rocks, and producing a chaos of water and fragments within a few yards of the bow of the *Nereide*... Another interval... and then a fresh turmoil of water and of dark objects blown into the air to a giddy height... then the falling of all these in a dark shower... a confused ebullition from the sea bottom... and a stillness.

The *Nereide* rent in pieces, and sunk in thirty two metres of water, has sent to the surface dense waves, bloodstained, from those living targets, some petrol, to-

gether with another substance not so dense, yet redder and still showing signs of life... No: there was yet another thing, the telephone buoy whereby communication might be held with the world, while those in danger were still belonging to that world. In the fearful wreck this small adjunct came up unharmed, having faithfully



The submarine "Delfino".

completed its duties, whether of information or of succour. Upon a large brass plate it bore the following words: *Attention - telephonic buoy - R. submarine "Nereide" - do not fire at the buoy - open the lid - follow the instructions enclosed.*

Very naturally the buoy was empty, and no instructions had been prepared or enclosed. But the empty space may well have been filled with the heroic souls of those poor dead, all speaking unheard their martyr tongue: this telephone buoy of the *Nereide* may have told the tale of how they obeyed orders and how they died. Perhaps these were the instructions...

O comrades all, living under arms by sea and by land, let us meditate on these orders coming from out a tomb of steel, deep down in the Adriatic, beside the strong foundations of a bloodstained rock, which will serve as their imperishable monument throughout the ages... Let us follow in their way...

V.

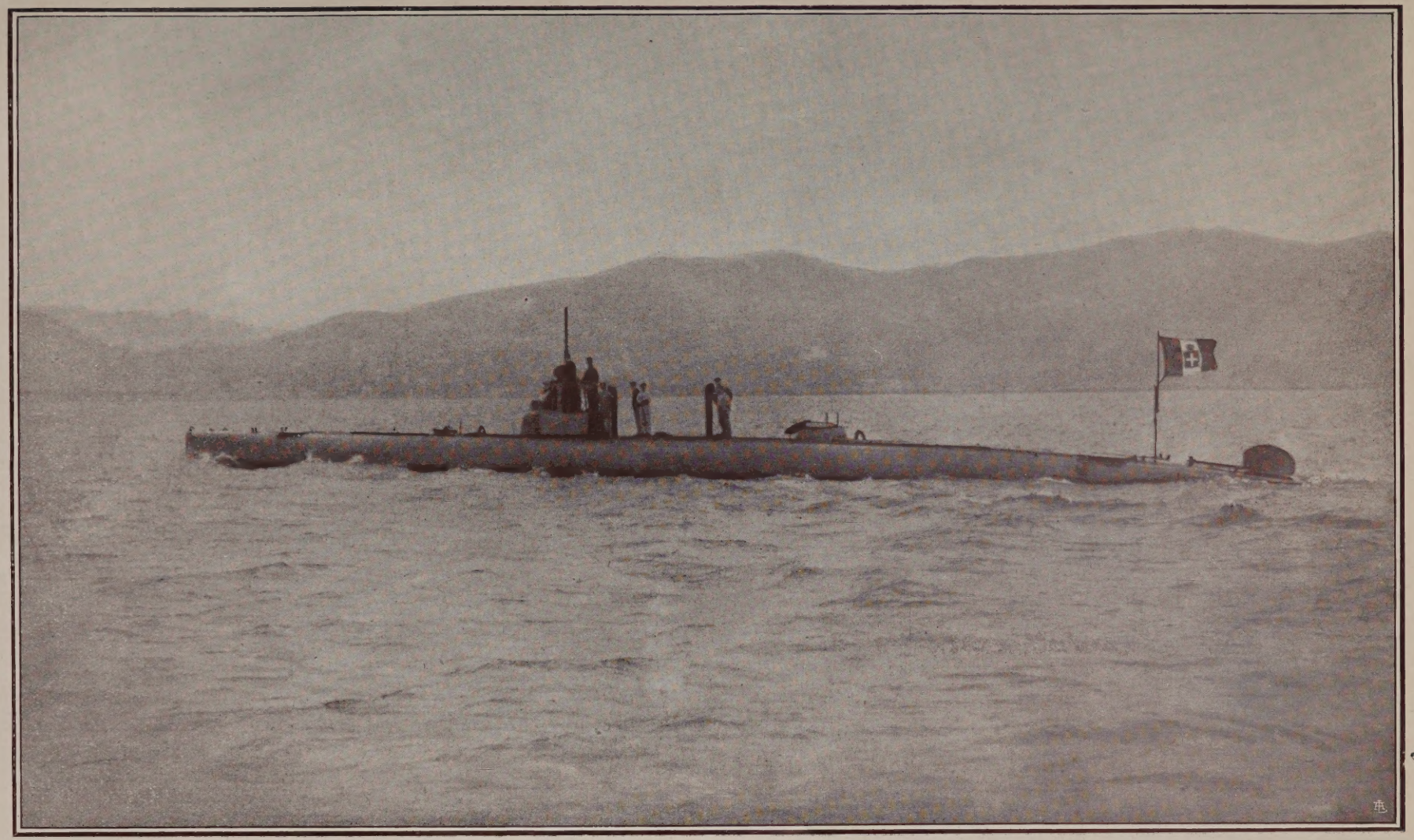
Do you want more names? They are there, written in the depths of the gulf of Fiume and in those of the Adriatic coast. The Adriatic demands the shedding of blood to ensure its freedom, and as the country well knows, we have bestowed much thereof upon that enterprise. But other names will come to fill their places. In its depths our ships and those of the enemy lie side by side under the same winding sheet of sand, and those names of "ours" are counterpoised by a long list of *U* (Unterseeboot) destroyed by us: *U 3, U 4, U 6, U C 12, U 12, U 16...* Assassins whom we execute, refusing for obvious reasons to complete the list. We have put an end to the boat that torpedoed the *Garibaldi,* to that which sunk the *Renaudin,* and to that responsible for the *Nembo.* So that if the word "assassin" seems inappropriate to such deeds as those accomplished in fair war, it cannot be denied that these *U* boats are the pirates of the Mediterranean, for whom the destruction of unarmed vessels and the slaying of innocent people is a great joy.

This very day our seas are ploughed in all senses of the word, by our large new submarines, with the magnificent experience gained in the small ones. Day and night, without ceasing, agile, expert, rapid, ready for anything, they rake over the waters, cleared of the enemy flag.

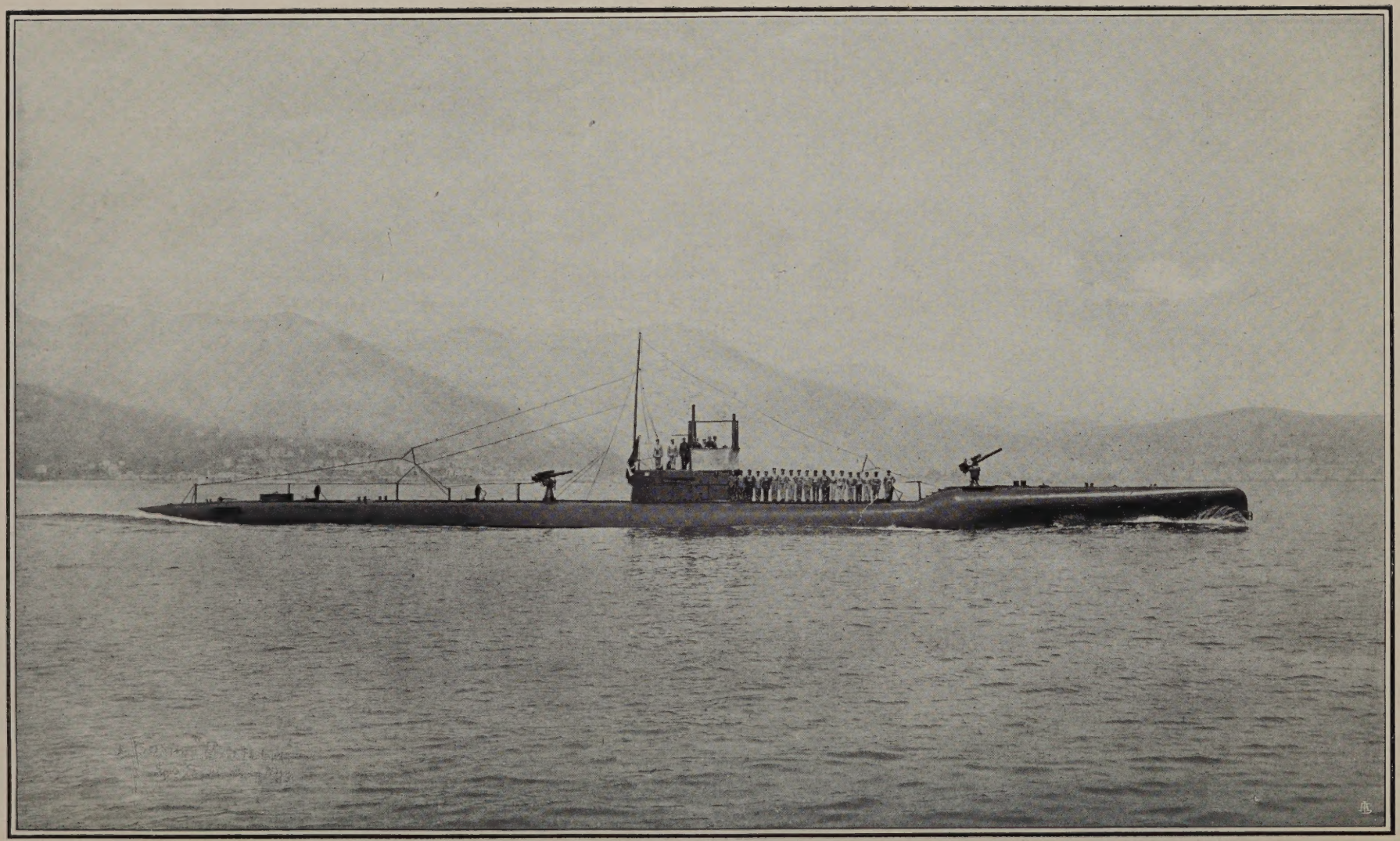
Yet they will not tire: for the prey will come.

You... Austria, will the prey be seized?

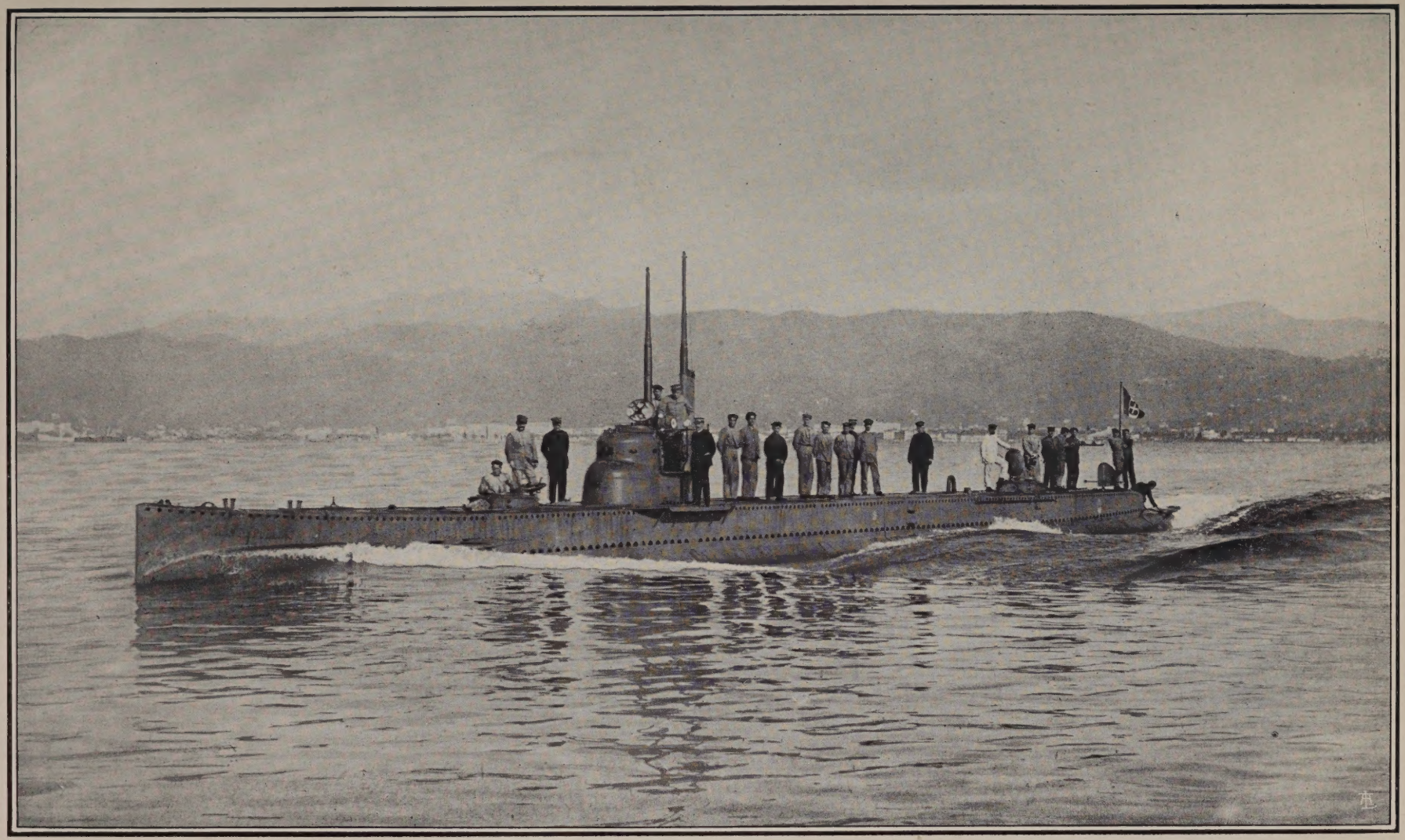
GUIDO MILANESI.



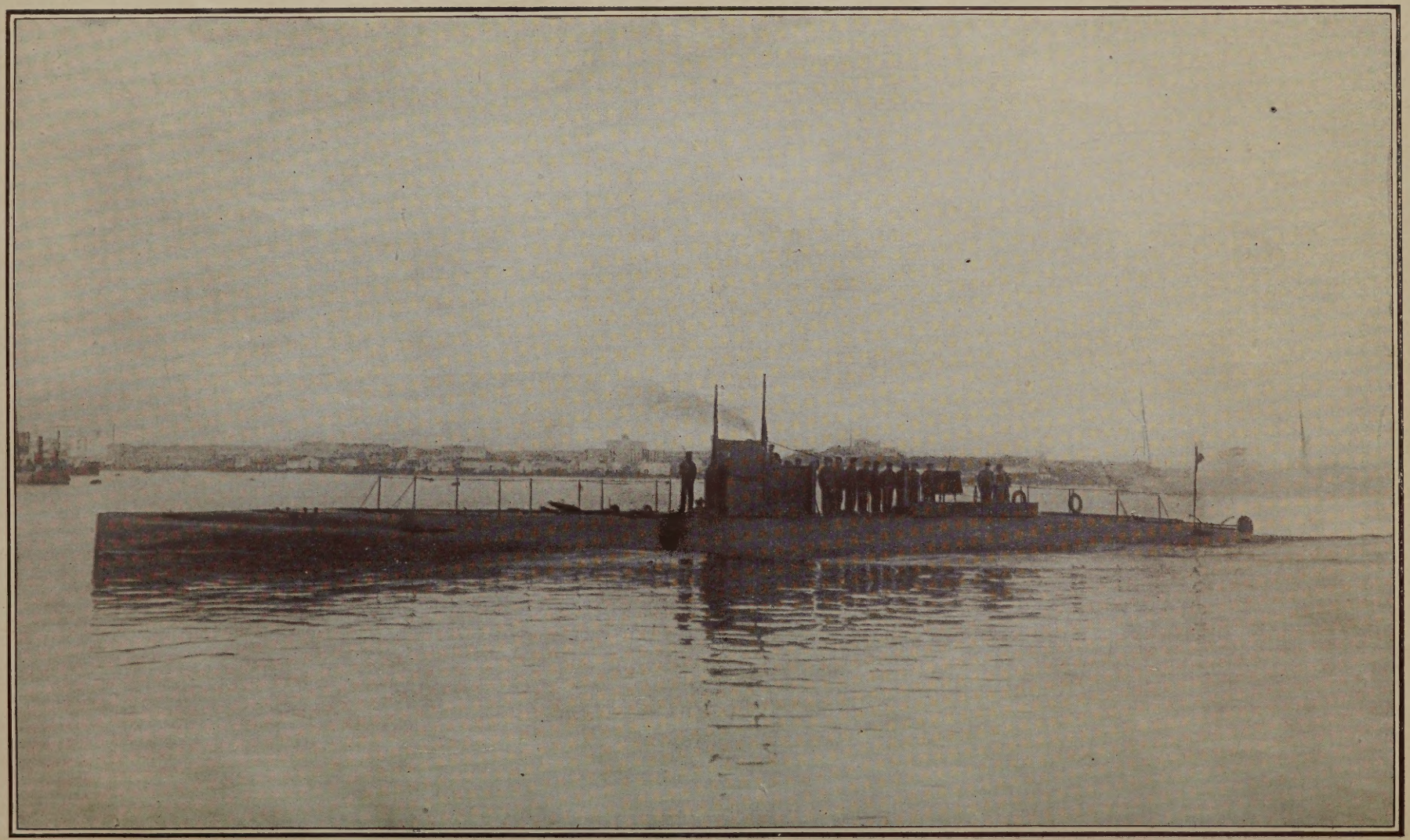
The submarine "Medusa"



The submarine " Balilla ".



The submarine "Pullino".



The submarine "Argonauta", which beat off Austrian vessels while they were attacking our Adriatic coast.

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